

THE *J. 45*
Morning-Exercise

A T
CRIPPLE-GATE:

O R,

Several Cases of Conscience Practically Re-
solved, by sundry Ministers,
September, 1661.

— Commending our selves to every mans Conscience
in the fight of God, 2 Cor. 4. 2.

*Unicuique est liber sua conscientia, & ad hunc librum dis-
cutiendum & emendandum omnes alii inventi sunt.*

Bernard. de Inter. Dom. p. 1072. c. 28.

*Ὁ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἕκαστος ἔχει τὴν συνείδησίν, ὡς καὶ κατὰ τὸν Θεόν, ὡς ἡ συνείδησις ἡ
ἐκκατασκευασμένη τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ Θεοῦ. Polyb. Frag. p. 1029.*

The Third Edition.

L O N D O N,

Printed by T. Milbourn, for Joshua Johnson, to be sold by Edw.
Bremser at the Crane, and Nevil Simmons at the Princes-Armes
in St. Pauls Church-Yard, Tho. Parkhurst at the Bible and Three
Crowns in Cheapside, and by Robert Boulter at the Turks-Head over
against the Royal Exchange, 1671.

THE Morning-Exercise

AT
CRIPPLE-GATE:

Radically Re-
vellers,

many Conference

These books are
sold by the
author.



Several
fol.

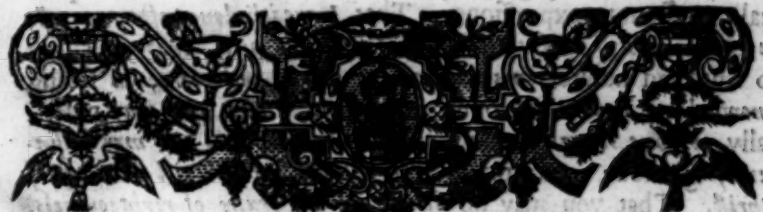
Comm.

University of
Cambridge

Printed by T. Milbourn, for J. Johnson, in Pall-mall, near the Theatre Royal, in the year 1791.



Printed by T. Milbourn, for J. Johnson, to be sold by him, at the Crane, and New-street, at the Printer's, near the Theatre Royal, in the year 1791.



To my most unfeignedly Beloved Parishioners of St. GILES Cripplegate.

My Dear Friends,



These Sermons, both preached and printed, are the meer product of love to your Souls. I never yet (that I remember) went thorow the Parish without some (though not sutablely compassionate) heart-aking yearnings towards my charge, to think (and oh that I could think of it according to the *worth* of Souls) how many thousands here are *posting* to Eternity, that within a few years will be in *Heaven or Hell*, and I know not how, so much as to *ask* them *whither* they are *going*. While God continues me your *Watchman*, I shall affectionately desire, and solicitously endeavour to keep my self *pure from the blood of all men*, and that not only Aks 22. 16. for the saving of my own Soul, by delivering my Message, but that you also may be saved by entertaining it. I am willing therefore to commend unto you some *legible* provocations to *serious* Piety, and therefore have procured a *contribution* of help, that *in the multitude* of Spiritual Counsellors your Souls may have *safety*. Prov. 11 24. In short, my Brethren give me leave to say, that

Phil. 1. 8, 9,
10, 11.

if I had but the *Apostles* Graces to help me in the manner, I can (without boasting) at present use the matter of his Spiritually-passionate expressions; That I greatly long after you all, in the bowels of *Fesus Christ*. And this I pray, that your love to truth and holiness may abound yet more, and more, in saving knowledge, and in all sound judgement. That you may practically approve things that are excellent; and that you may be sincerely gracious, and universally without offence till the day of *Christ*. That you may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by *Fesus Christ* unto the glory and praise of God. These (my Beloved) are and shall be (through Grace) the constant desires and restless endeavours of

Novemb. 14.

Your most Affectionate

1661.

Soul - Servant,

Samuel Annesley

THE

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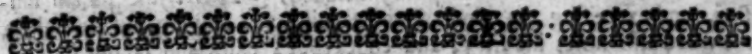
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HOW



How may we be universally and exactly Conscientious?

ACTS 24. 16.

And herein do I exercise my self, to have allwayes a Conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.



His Sermon is but preliminary to some select cases of Conscience. And in this Text you have a notable Anatomy of Conscience, wherein are these six things singularly considerable:

1. Here's the Index to the book of Conscience; The Eye to the portraiture of a Christian, that according to your several Standings, looks upon the *Business*, the *Time*, the *Manner*, and the *Cause* of this account.

Herein a] in this, i. e. in this business b q. d. here I am arraign'd as a Malefactor, charged with Sedition, Schism, and Heresie, in this my Conscience acquits me. Herein do I exercise, &c. Again,

Herein] in or at this time c, q. d. 'Tis but five dayes agoe, since I was flapt in the mouth for this defence, and I see those present, that so rashly, and illegally censured me, yet now before more equall Judges, I bring the same defence. Herein I exercise my self, &c. Again,

Herein] in this manner d, q. d. My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own Nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, which knew me from the beginning (if they would testifie) that I lived after the straitest felt of our Religion: And I am not conscious to my self of any crime in respect of their Law, either in my Judaism, or Christianity f: or thus,

Herein] q. d. I have hope towards God — that there shall be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; and therefore wish me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of mans judgement: yea, I judge not mine own self, for I know nothing by my self, yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord h. And therefore having an eye to the resurrection, and last judgement i, I exercise my self to have, &c.

B

2. Here's

a 'Er 17ro.
b In hoc vulg.
Erafm.
c Interca, Bez.
i. e. 17ro.
Xp. Dedica.
d Ethiopie.
i. e. 17ro.
De Dieu.
e Acta 26. 4. 5.
f Tirm. in
Acts 23. 1.
g Syr. 'A'ab.
propterea. Did.
Deo. De Dieu.
verse 15.
h 1 Cor. 4. 3. 4.
i Propter hoc i
propter hanc fi-
duciam. Gro.
tius.

k dux medi-
tor, and some-
times the
same with
traditio. Bu-
daz.

I Operam do,
elaborat con-
cinna, orno, colo.
Steph.

m' Agnus uti-
tur Paulus sig-
nificatione con-
jugationis. Heb.

Hinbaphel. Bez.

n Cantic. 1. 6.

o 1 Cor. 9. 27.

p 1 Cor. 9. 27.

q Rom. against

lib. of conf. p. 1.

q Rom. against

lib. of conf. p. 1.

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q Rom. against

lib. of conf. p. 1.

2. Here's the *Act* with the *quality* included, [*I exercise k*] I am mu-
sing, and exercising my mind: I am learning and busying my thoughts;
the word also notes industry, and endeavour; pains and labour *l*, *q. d.*
this is my meditation, my study, my work and employment to *get*, to
keep, and *use*, a Conscience void of offence, &c.

3. Consider the *Subject* of this exercise [*my self m*] 'twas himself,
not only his hearers; he took on him the *care* of all the Churches, but
he would not have it charged upon him; that he kept others Vineyards
and neglected his own *n*: he would be sure so to exercise himself, that
he might not by any means, *when he had preached to others, himself be a*
cast away o.

4. Consider the *Object* of this exercise, and that is [*Conscience*] and
pray consider the manner of expressing himself [*to have a Conscience*]
to be owner of a good Conscience *q*: All men have a Conscience, but
we may say of most, Conscience hath them: they have a Conscience, as
they have a *Feaver*, or a disease; Conscience is troublesome and dis-
quiets them, they can not sin so freely, as if they had no inward gripe,
and therefore they had rather be rid of their Consciences, than be thus
troubled with them. But now the Apostle he would have a Conscience
to commune with, he would do nothing but what he is willing his De-
puty-Judge shall approve of.

5. Consider the *quality* of the Subject [*void of offences r*] i. e. without
any thing which will not endure the scrutiny of both divine and hu-
mane judgement *s*. The distribution notes the entireness, exactness, and
excellency of his Gospel-carriage, in his Religion towards God, and in
his Conversation among men *t*. He made it his business to live purely
before God, and righteously among men.

6. Consider the *Continuance* of this exercise [*alwaies w*] 'tis not on-
ly by fits and starts, when in some good mood, or under some pangs of
conviction; 'tis not only when arrested by sickness, or affrighted by the
apprehension of death, but alwaies, at all times.

The words thus opened, the General Case that lies upon me to re-
solve, is this:

Case,

How may we be universally, and exactly conscientious?

Universally, in respect of things; exactly, in respect of manner.

To answer this, (so far as I can crowd it into a Sermon) I shall pre-
sent you with these four things. 1. What *Conscience* is. 2. What it's *Ob-*
jects. 3. What it's *Offices*. 4. What are the *Kinds* of Consciences;
Wherein various *directions* are necessary, for remedies and *rules* which
when laid together, will resolve the Case.

Conscience

1. Conscience is man's judgment of himself *x*, i. e. of his Estate and Actions *y*, as they are subjected unto the judgment of God. I therefore close with this description to waver the determination of that School-dispute, whether it be an *Act* *z*, or an *Habit* *a*, whether of the Understanding *b*, or Will *c*, or both *d*, whether it be a distinct Faculty *e*, or Power *f*, how far borne with us, and how far acquired *g*. I willingly let pass all *b*, that doth not further the design I drive at, viz. an universal and exact conscientiousness.

For Conscience, the Hebrews ordinarily make use of two words, viz. [Heart] and [Spirit] [Heart] in Prov. 4. 23 Keep thy Heart *i*, i. e. keep thy Conscience with all diligence; and so in the New-Testament, 1 Job. 3. 20. if our Heart *k*, i. e. if our Conscience condemn us, [Spirit] in Prov. 18. 14. A wounded Spirit *l*, i. e. a wounded Conscience who can bear; and so in the New Testament, 1 Cor. 2. 11. What man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit *m* of man *i*. e. the Conscience of Man that is in him. But in English (as also in the Greek *n*, and Latine *o*, whence we borrow it) 'tis called [Conscience] knowledge with another, which excellently sets forth the Scriptural nature of it, as Job 16. 19. My witness is in heaven, and Rom. 9. 1. I say the truth—my Conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost. In both places, *q*. d. God witnesseth with my Conscience *p*. Conscience is placed in the middle, under God, and above man *q*. I will close this with Brochmand's description of Conscience, to be a kind of silent reasoning of the Mind, whose definitive sentence is received by some affection of the Heart, whereby those things which are judged to be good and right, are approved of with delight; but those things which are evil and naughty, are disapproved with grief and sorrow. God hath placed this in all men, partly to be a judgment and testimony of that integrity to which man was at first created, and of that corruption that followed sin; partly that God may have a Tribunal erected in the breasts of men to accuse delinquents; and to excuse those that do what is good and right.

que ardam quoad usum & exercitium conjunctionem, sive connexionem, ut non solum vocabulorum appellationes, sed & reates singulorum proprietates, & officia, reliquis promiscue & indiscriminatum attribui soleant, idque non in exotericis tantum poetarum, oratorum, aliorumque humaniorum literaturarum auctoribus, (quibus licentia loqui permissum est) sed & in dogmaticis Philosophorum & Scholasticorum scriptis—Idem eodem *p*. 9. and in the last Paragraph of that Lecture, absilvi tandem—certe obscurius quam aut voluissim, aut debuissim, si res aliter tulisset—Profeculo intricata est & perplexa omnis (quod viri gravissimi jam olim conqueisti sunt) de anima intellectiva potentia & facultatibus disquisitio—qua capere se putant, & quidem suo modo capiunt illiteratissimi quique humunciones; hac ipsa non capiunt acutissimi philosophi—quid in re neque satis admirari Dei Opt. Max. infinitam Sapientiam, retundentis hoc pacto humanam superbiam; & re presentantis mortalibus, velut in speculo, inane illam duntaxat, quae sibi videntur aliquid esse, cum nihil sint, misere decipientes cor suum.—*p*. 35. 35.

i .ךך cor tuum. *k* נאפדיא. *l* מן הרוח. *n* אור השם. *o* Conscientia. *p* Sanderson ibidem, & postea spissim: *q* Perkins Vol. 2. l. 1. p. 11. *r* Brochmand. T. 1. Art. 1. c. 3. q. 2. p. 7.

B 2

2. The

f Mr. Bernard 2. The Object of Conscience is very various, Conscience hath great
of conf. p. 56. employment, and much business with the whole man, and with all his
& seq. actions, 'tis like those living Creatures in the Revelation all over eyes;
2 Cor. 1. 12. it looks to the Understanding t; whether our wisdom be carnal or gra-
u Rom. 7. 18. cious; to the Will u, whether it go beyond, or fall short in ability of good
x Rom. 9. 1, 2. performances; to the Affections x, whether the entertainment or refusal
y Heb. 9. 14. of the Gospel be the matter of greatest joy or sorrow. It pries into all
z 2 Tim. 1. 3. our Actions both towards God and man. Towards God, whether in general
a Heb. 9. 9. our estate be good y; in special, whether our service be inward and z Spiritu-
b Heb. 10. 22. al, or only outward a and formal. More particularly, it surveighs all our
c 1 Tim. 3. 9. duties, whether we pray in faith b; whether we hear with profit c; whe-
d 1 Pet. 3. 21. ther through our Baptism, we can go unto God as unto an Oracle d;
Interp. 72. v. whether in the Lords Supper we have singular Communion with Christ e;
cabulo itag- quando in V. T. in short, whether we do and will stick close to Religion f; as knowing,
terrogare tur interrogare os Domini— that if Conscience do not steer right, Religion will be Shipwrackt g.
os Domini— Thus duties towards God are the great object of Conscience, but duties
baptismus est towards man are the Secondary, and like unto it. Towards man in our
interrogare tur whole conversation h. Particularly, that we be obedient to Rulers i,
os Domini— (and that which is in one place charged upon us for Conscience sake, is
baptismus est in another place commanded for the Lords sake k) in short, that we be
interrogare tur just in all our dealings l, avoiding all justly offensive things m, words n,
os Domini— thoughts o, that we express singular charity p; especially to souls q, and
baptismus est this in prayer r, when we can do nothing else, and Conscience doth not
interrogare tur only do all this at present urging to duty, or shooting or tingling under
os Domini— the commission of sin, but it foresees things future, provoking to good,
baptismus est and cautioning against evil; and also looks back upon things past with
interrogare tur joy or torment, so that it is easier to reckon what is not the object of
os Domini— conscience, than what is; in a word, Every thing of duty and sin is the
baptismus est object of Conscience.

3. The Offices of Conscience are likewise various. In General, the pro-
per Office of Conscience is discursively to apply that light which is in
the mind unto particular actions, or cases. The light which is in the
mind is either the light of Nature, or the light of Divine Revelation.
By the light of Nature, I understand those common notions, which are
written in the hearts of men, which (as a brand pluckt out of the com-
mon burning) are the reliques of the Image of God after the fall. Not
only Scripture, but experience evidenceth, that those which are practical
Atheists, that say unto God, depart from us f, we desire not the knowledge of
thy waies, yet cannot get rid of his Deputy, their Conscience: they car-
ry a Spy, a Register, a Monitor in their bosome, that doth accuse and
trouble

trouble them, they cannot sin in quiet *r*. Those that are without or Reject the Sun-shine of Scripture, yet they cannot blow out Gods Candle of Conscience. By Divine revelation I mean both the standing rule of Scripture*, and Gods extraordinary & discoveries of himself, whether by dreams or visions, or Prophecies, or other Spiritual communications; all which, though (if they be from God) they are according to Scripture *y*; yet the former are afforded upon particular & Providences, and the last are the universal privileges of particular favourites, *a*: But it is the Office of Conscience to apply all these, and that it doth by the discourse of a practical Syllogisme *b* *e* *g*.

Whoever believeth *c*, (*i. e.* accepteth of Christ as Lord *d*, and Saviour) shall be saved, but (may the gracious person say) I accept of Christ as Lord and Saviour *e*. Therefore shall I be saved.

Or thus. Whoever is unfeignedly willing to have his actions brought to the Scripture touchstone to be tried, whether they be right for the matter, and to the Scripture Ballance to be weighed, whether they are weight for the manner, his deeds are wrought in God, *i. e.* he is in a state of Grace, he acteth by the gracious assistance of the Spirit of God *f*.

But (may the trembling soul say) I desire nothing more than to bring myself and all my actions to a Scripture trial *g*.

Therefore (he may conclude) I am in a state of Grace *h*, &c.

Once more. Whoever committeth sin (*i. e.* makes a trade of Sin) is of the Devil (*i. e.* is the Child of the Devil.)

But (may every unregenerate Person say *k*) I make a trade of sin, *i. e.* when I am a sinning I am in my Element, I am where I would be, there is no work so pleasing to me.

Therefore I am the Child of the Devil *l*, *i. e.* I am in a state of Damnation.

In the (major or) first proposition, you have the dictate of Conscience. In the (minor or) second proposition, you have the Testimony of Conscience, and in the Conclusion, you have the judgment of Conscience *o*: In the first the power of Conscience is very great, so great that it can do any thing but make evil good *p*, for it can make an indifferent action good or evil *q*: and it can make a good action evil *r*: therefore in things necessary it doth so bind, that no humane Laws

conscientia, conscientia diſtamen, lex naturalis, ſcintilla rationis, conſueſcentia, &c. Eſtius in 2. l. Sent. diſtinct. 39. § 2. p. 427. n. conscientia reſpectu propoſitionis, dicitur lumen & lex reſpectu aſſumptionis & conſuſionis, teſtis; ſed reſpectu aſſumptionis aptiſſime vocatur index vel liber; & reſpectu conſuſionis maxime proprie iudex. Amel. de conſcien. l. 1. c. 1. p. 13. § 9. o. Propoſitionem dictam conſueſcentia. Aſſumpſio per appropriationem vocatur conſueſcentia. conſuſio eſt ipſa reſolutio. Ibidem § 10. p. Ibidem Theſes Theol. de Conf. p. 44. § 18. q. r. Martinius de verb. conſc.

t Quod ergo in corpore hoc poſt modum importuna cogitatione verſo in mentes & multitudine grauius torqueor in recordatione quam prius capitis faciem operis perpetratione. Bern. de inter. dom. c. 30. p. 1094. u Prov. 20. 27. * ſa. 8. 20. x Nu. 12. 6, 7, 8. Heb. 1. 3. y 1 John 4. 1. z 2 Chr. 20. 14. 1 Kin. 13. 20, 21. Nu. 24 per totum. a 2 Cor. 12. 2, 3, 4. b Sapiens clau. Reg. l. 1. c. 32. p. 4. c John 3. 39. d 1 Cor. 12. 27. e John 20. 28. f John 3. 20, 21. g Psalm. 132. 23, 24.

b Pal. 26. 1, 2. i John 3. 8. k Rom. 6. 208. l Rom. 6. 16. m Habitudo cognisio menti impressa, variis ab auditoribus nuncupatur, ut

J Acts 4. 19
Vix crediderim
apud se fuisse
Stapletonum
cum hac esset
ret. Forum con
scientie dixit
esse longe ma
jorem partem cla
vum. Cham.
Paufl. T. 2. l. 11
c. 9. p. 203.

§ 23
1 Rom. 1. 14
2 Rom. 6. 16
3 Acts 20. 22
4 2 Cor. 5. 14
5 1 Cor. 9. 16
6 Acts 4. 20
7 1 King 8. 47
8 *cy reverfi fu
rint ad cor su
um ex heb.*
9 Psal. 19. 59
10 Hof. 7. 2.
11 Jer. 12. 11
12 *על כל
פונת super cor
e Haggl 1. 5.
there tis*

שמו
לבבכם על
רוב יום

13 *ponite cor ve
strum super vi
am vestram.*
14 2 Cor. 13. 5

there's both *wee* 217 (q. d. make as strict a scrutiny into your own hearts, as the Devil will do when he tempts you) & *doxus* 218 (be as loath to be mistaken in your graces, as a Usurer in his coyn)

15 Rom. 2. 18, 21, 22. b Joh 3. 20. i Deut. 29. 19. k Jam 1. 22. *magis argui deus falsa argumentatione ut cy
subdola suppuratione fallere*, as those in Mat 7. 21, 22, 23. Broch. in loc. l Rev. 12. 10. The Devil accuseth them to themselves, as well as unto God day and night. m Psal. 126. 1. n Luke 7. 6, 9.

can loosen s, and thereupon we are said to be down-right debtors t, en
gaged servants u, spiritually bound †, lovingly constrained x, graciously
necessitated y; Yea, in a word, we can do no other (unless we will offer
violence to our Consciences) then do what God chargeth upon us as
duty z. Thus far the dictate of Conscience, in the Testimony of Consci
ence, Conscience examines, fits, and tries our actions; this in Scripture
is called a returning into a mans own heart a, a thinking of our waies b,
a speaking to our heart c, a laying things to heart d, a setting our heart
upon a business e, an examination and trial of our selves f; and thence
the conclusion is inferred from the premisses according to our appre
hension of the rule and account of our actions. Yet this is worthy of
special observation, that though both the premisses be undeniably true,
yet there's nothing more ordinary then for not only wicked g, but graci
ous persons (though upon different grounds) to deny the conclusion:
and the truth is, without the Spirits assistance by way of conviction to
the wicked, and relief to the godly, neither of them will prove any bet
ter Logicians, than still to deny the conclusion. Graceless persons
they will not conclude against themselves: For, 1. They will not weigh
the cogency of any Scriptural argument. 2. They have sucked in other
self flattering conclusions i: and 3. they are willing to put a cheat up
on themselves k, so these will not conclude against themselves. And on
the other hand; gracious persons dare not conclude themselves so hap
py as the Scripture represents them. 1. Through the prevalency of
Temptations l, Satan frights them from their comforts. 2. Through the
abounding of grace m, they think 'tis too good to be true, especially con
sidering, 3. their sence of unworthines n; what! they pass a sentence
of absolution upon their souls! of approbation upon their actions!
No, they dare not, through over-modesty they'l bely the very Spirit
of grace. In short, the only remedy I shall commend to both sorts is
this, viz. Beg of God to perswade thy heart to close with convincing
truth, q. d.

217 (q. d. make as strict a scrutiny into your own hearts, as the Devil will do when he tempts you) & 218 (be as loath to be mistaken in your graces, as a Usurer in his coyn)

Lord thou hast told me in thy word, that if I come unto Christ, I shall in
no wise be cast out: and if I love God, I may thereby be sure that
God loves me p.
But Lord, so far as I am able by searching to know my own Heart, I de
sire nothing more than to come q to Christ, to receive Christ r, to be

one with Christ, to be conformable to Christ. And Lord, I dare say with Peter, thou that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee; u if prizing thee above all things in the world w, if restless longing x for further acquaintance, and more inward y communion; if pantings after the secrets of thy z presence, and fear of nothing more than to offend thee a, be infallible evidences of sincere love, then I dare appeal unto thee, that I love thee.

Therefore Lord persuade my soul thankfully to acknowledg, that 'tis in a safe condition. On the contrary, Thus:

Lord thou hast told me, that if I live after the flesh, I shall b die.

But my heart & life undeniably evidence, that I mind nothing but carnality.

Therefore Lord convince me, that there's but a step c, but a d breath between me and everlasting death.

Thus Christians, do but suffer and help your Conscience to do its office, and then shall you have rejoycing in your selves alone, and not in e another, i. e. you will find cause of rejoycing in the testimony of your own Conscience, and not in others thinking you to be better than you are, nor in your thinking your selves to be better than others. Thus you have the Offices of Conscience. I come in the last place to speak of

4. The kinds of Conscience I know are commonly reduced to these four, viz. Good and quiet; Good and troubled. Evil and quiet; Evil and troubled. But intending the resolution of the Case before me in speaking to Conscience under the several kinds of it; I shall speak to eight kinds of Consciences. The two first, viz. the sleepy and the scared Conscience are peculiar to the worst of men. The four next, viz. the erring, doubting, scrupulous and trembling Consciences, are almost indifferent to good and bad; only the two former have a greater bias to bad: and the two latter have a greater tendency to Good: but the two last kinds, viz. The Good and Honest, and the Good and quiet Consciences are peculiar to Gods choicest favourites. In treating of these, I shall endeavour to acquaint you with the nature of each g, how to cure the evil, and how to obtain the good; and hereby the Application will be entwisted with the Explication throughout my discourse.

1. The first, and one of the worst kinds of Consciences in the world, is the sleepy Conscience; such is the Conscience of every unconverted person (that is not yet under horror) their h spirit, i. e. their Conscience is asleep; that as bodily sleep bindeth up all the senses and animal spirits, so this spiritual (or rather unspiritual) sleepiness, bindeth up the

is quasi spiritus naturalis.

soul,

s. Gal. 2. 20.

1. Heb. 2. 11.

u Joh. 21. 17.

w Psal. 73. 25.

x Psal. 119. 20.

y Psal. 106. 4.

z Psal. 45. 14.

a Psal. 119. 120.

b Rom. 8. 13.

c Job 21. 13.

d Psal. 146. 4.

e Gal. 6. 4.

f Bern. de consci.

p. 1107.

g But here I

must say with

Aug. Non pos-

sum ut valo ex-

plicare quod

senio: amen.

quid moliar di-

cere, peto ut

non expellat

verba mea sa-

gacissime si po-

restu intelliga-

ri— Odi despi-

nire—nam fa-

cilius est mihi

videre in alie-

rius definitione

quod non pro-

hem, quam quic-

quam bene de-

finiendo expli-

care. Aug. T. 1.

l. 2. de Ord. c. 1.

2. p. 671.

1. The sleepy

Conscience.

b Rom. 11. 8.

γρυμνα κατα-

νύξω.

β.

κατακατα-

κατακατα-

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i Prius om-
nis sensus &
iudicii. Illyr.
in prad. loc.
& Ephe. 5. 14.
1 Mat. 26. 41.
m Cant. 5. 2.
n Rev. 3. 20.
a Prov. 6. 9, 10
p Concessio iro-
nica et opaciam
habens pigro-
rum elegantissi-
mam. Jun. in
loc.
q Videmus con-
scientiam veluti
veteris ac le-
thargo aliquam
diu sepulcam,
Ecce. Epist. Inst.
theol. l. 1. c. 3.
p. 11.

soul from all sense *i* of the evil of sin, and want of grace, and there-
fore in conversion Christ doth awaken *k* the Conscience. The Disci-
ples of Christ have their spirits waking, when their bodies *l* are slum-
bring, *i. e.* they have a gracious *habitus* of watchfulness, when they are
overtaken with some carnal *acts* of sleepiness. Christ complains of un-
kindness *m*, that his Spouse sleeps in the morning, when he knocks for
early entertainment; but the unconverted let Christ stand knocking all
the day, till supper time *n*; they will spend their day with their lulls;
and if Christ will knock and wait till the day of their life be almost
spent, then they'll pretend to open: but how long must God call? How
long *o* wilt thou sleep *O* sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?
and they'll answer, *Let p a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of*
the hands to sleep. The plain truth is, though wicked men cannot quite
stifle their consciences *q*, yet their Consciences do but as is were *talk* in
their sleep, and they take no more notice of them, then they do of their
dreams.

Causes of a sleepy Conscience are (besides the sluggishness of our de-
praved natures)

1. A spiritual intoxication, all unconverted persons are *drunk* with the
love of sin, and therein behave themselves like *Solomons* r drunkard that
lies down to sleep in the *heart* of the sea, or upon the top of a *mast*,
in the very midst of the greatest *soul danger*: He doth that daily which
Jonah did once, run away from God, and then composeth himself to
sleep, *f* when God is pursuing him with judgments; and dreams of no-
thing but impunity, and happiness. Love of sin is the Devils *Opium*
whereby he casts the Conscience into a dead sleep, that no arm but of
Omnipotency can waken it. He meets with something in the world,
which he likes better than the holy ways of God, and therefore will not
seek God *t*; Gods waies are always grievous to him. — *he hath said in his*
heart: I shall not be moved — *God hath forgotten: he hideth his face, he will*
never see it — *he contemns God, and saith in his heart, thou wilt not require*
it. They wink, and then conclude God doth not see them.

f Jonah 1. 5.
t Psal. 10. 4, 5, 11, 13. *Iustitiam ut ille apud Platonem Thrasymachus, appellat γαρρῶτα κοινοῦται, elegan-*
tem stultitiam — they sleep, and then aiunt deum dormire aut oblitum esse eorum quæ fiunt in terris, &c.
Aug. Steuch. Eng. Enar in loc.

2. Carnal conceits of grace and heaven. At the best, humane wisdom
is their highest *Guide*, their great and supream *Oracle*; in their mis-
hap- pen apprehensions of their need of mercy, they are willing to be flat-
tered

tered, that it may be had without such feverities in Religion, as they are unwilling to undertake. *Why should they be wiser than their Neighbours? all men are not fools. Men as wise, and as learned, neither press nor practise such strictness; and do you think they have not a care of their souls? they do not doubt but they shall do as well as the best. Though, poor souls, they know that wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereby; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Mark that, [that find it] he doth not say x that enter into it, but that find it. Those that do not walk in the way of holiness, 'tis impossible they should ever find it. The gate doth not lead to the way, but the way to the gate. Do not think to get to Heaven first, and learn heavenly-mindedness after; yea, Heaven must not suffer violence; striving is the condition of entering. Rouse up therefore, and shake off your worldly wisdom, your ignorant self-love, your abuse of mercies, your contempt of God, and your forgetfulness of Death and Judgment. But how shall we do this?*

¶ Mat. 7. 13, 14. x Non dicite pauci ingreduntur quod difficile est, sed pauci inveniunt. Par. in loc. y Vide Auth. imperice. oper. Hom. 18. p. 71. z Mat. 11. 12. a Luk. 13. 24. vide Stell. in loc. b See Abernethy's Physick for the Soul. c. 7. p. 93. &c.

1. The first Remedy I shall commend, is *Consideration*. Let the subject of thy consideration be what thou wilt, (only I could wish it may relate to eternity, whither thou art posting) and I shall not doubt of the success. Let me for once insert a relation I heard between the preaching and the transcribing of this Sermon. *The Father of a Prodigal left it, on his death-bed charge, unto his only Son, to spend a quarter of an hour every day in retired thinking, but left him at liberty to think of what he would, only engaged him to spend a quarter of an hour in thinking. The Son having this liberty to please himself in the subject, sets himself to the performance of his promise; his thoughts one day recul his past pleasures, another contrive his future delights; but at length his thoughts became inquisitive, what might be his Father's end in proposing this task: he thought his Father was a wise and good man, therefore surely he intended and hoped that he would sometimes or other think of Religion: When this lesson's thoughts, they multiplied abundantly, neither could he contain them in so short a confinement, but was that night sleepless, and afterwards restless, till he became seriously religious. O that I could persuade you to go and do likewise.*

2. Observe what means thou shunneest as too startling, and make use

2. unnatural, and 3. of all unrighteousness. Custom of sinning, takes away Conscience of sinning.

For Cure. Seriously set your selves against those peculiar wayes of sinning which have brought you to this. You know them, there's not any one that hath a *fearful* Conscience, but he *dark* (for easily may) know how it came so; your work (in some respect) is not so large as in case of the *sleepy* Conscience, 'tis but one or two sorts of sins that are *eminently* mischievous to your Souls in this case, though a *fearful* Conscience is worse than a *sleepy* Conscience; yet as it is more easily discernable, so 'tis but reasonable you should more speedily and vigorously set upon the cure, take heed of accounting any sin small; lest at last you account no any sin great; I will commend one Text to you, and close this particular, *Exek. 24. 13, 14. In thy filthiness is thy strength, because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee: I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to pass, and I will do it, I will not go back, nor shall I spare, neither will I repent.* &c. Sirs, God hath been your Physician, hath used a variety of Remedies: If nothing will prevail, but you will industriously *finger* your Consciences to make them *sensless*, as sure as God is true, he will make you *sensible* of your sin by everlasting burnings.

I forbear in argument, because in the following cases about the Mortification of beloved lusts, about *relapses*, and how to check the first rising of sin, you will have suitable directions to make your brawny Consciences tender. I proceed therefore to those kinds of Consciences, none else will I speak to, viz.

cata a parvis incipiunt, &c. Dorotheus B. P. T. 4. p. 769. *Iustus medicus, qui putrida non parit carnis, non parit, ut parcat: crudelis est, ut miscatur.* Hieron in loc. *My fury*

III. An *erring* Conscience is that which judgeth otherwise than the thing is. Conscience is sometimes deceived through ignorance of what is right, by apprehending a false rule for a true, an error for the Will of God: Sometimes through ignorance of the fact, by misapplying a right rule to a wrong action; Conscience evil informed, takes humane traditions, and false doctrines, proposed under the shew of divine Authority to be the Will of God: a famous instance you have of this in *Jeroboaams* case, he fears that if the people should go up to sacrifice at *Jerusalem*, then he should lose his Kingdom; this puts him upon enquiry, whether there should not be a double Sanctuary, as well as a double Kingdom?

Cure,

Cum capere quis dicere, quid est, si verbum hoc aut cum locum fuerit? — Hoc, quid id, quid illud? — Sensum incipit quid patet, tum in majora et graviora prolabi, et sic deinceps — in perfectam insensibilitatem decidit — curate deinde, quod levius sunt — et vitales et peccata a parvis incipiunt, &c. Dorotheus B. P. T. 4. p. 769. *Iustus medicus, qui putrida non parit carnis, non parit, ut parcat: crudelis est, ut miscatur.* Hieron in loc. *My fury* The Erring Conscience. *Ames de cons. l. 4. c. 4. p. 8.* *Dickson Therap. Sac. l. 1. c. 1. p. 3. sed. 18.* *Regim. Prax. calh. diff. ser. 3. p. 244. sed. 27.*

hereupon a Council is called, flattering Prophets come, they have dreams and visions, worthy of their affections, suitable to their purpose: A decree is made, *q. d.* 'tis sufficient that you have hitherto gone up to *Jerusalem*, now behold your gods, these Calves are like the Cherubims of the Sanctuary, which are as ministering Spirits before the face of God. (That these Calves had the shape of the Cherubims, you may gather by comparing of Scriptures, that which is called the face of an *† Ox* in one place, is called the face of a ** Cherub* in the other). This seems to the people a satisfying warrant for them readily *†* to follow the Kings Commandment. I might add another instance of the good old Prophet, who was *pleasantly* seduced to his bodily ** destruction*. Now 'tis a great question (among the *Papists* especially) *whether, and how far an erring Conscience binds?* One of their most learned *Casuists* that I meet with, peremptorily determines, that the Law of an erring Conscience is not dispensable by *†* God himself: Others ***, that 'tis good to follow an erring Conscience, when it hath the credit of a good Conscience, and is agreeable to reason. Others *x* that a right, and an erroneous Conscience, both bind, though in a different respect; a right Conscience, as it is *conformable* to the Law of God; an erring Conscience, as it is thought to be the Law of God; a right Conscience binds *simply*, an erroneous upon a *supposition*. Some distinguish ignorance into *y* vincible and invincible, and say, That when an *erroneous Conscience*, through invincible ignorance, judgeth that to be honest which is not so, yet that judgement is the next rule which the will is to follow. Others distinguish (where all men are not able to discern the difference) between *x* binding and obliging. But, in short, *they generally determine the question in the affirmative*; Though some grant, that though *b* we must do nothing against a true Conscience, yet we must depose an erroneous one, and go contrary to it. And others *c*, though we must do nothing against Conscience in any case, yet we must not follow Conscience in every case. The plain truth is, Error cannot bind us to follow it *d*; an erring Conscience may so bind, that it may be a sin to go against it; but it can never so bind, as it may be a *virtue* to follow it. To follow an erring Conscience, is for the blind sinner to follow his blind Conscience, till both fall into the ditch.

† Ezek. i. 10.

* Ezek. 10. 14.

& Ezek. 1. 7.

† Hof. 5. 11.

* 1 King. 13. 8.

† 18. 29. 24. 26.

† Ne quidem a

Deo, multo mi-

nus ab homine.

Bresser. de

Consc. l. 1. c. 22.

p. 555. sect. 212

* Ut igitur

bonum sit age-

re secundum

Conscientiam

errantem vo-

luntaria &

vitiosa opor-

tet existimari-

onem Consci-

tia bonam esse,

& cum recta

ratione congru-

entem. Azori-

us Mor. Instr.

l. 2. p. 124.

* Sayrus Clau.

Reg. l. 1. c. 4. p.

8. Sect. 13.

y Quando Con-

scientia erro-

rea ex invin-

cibili ignoran-

tia iudicat a-

liquid hone-

stum esse, quod honestum non est, tunc actus voluntatis, qui conformis est tali iudicio, bonus & ho-

nestus esset, nisi contingat obiectum esse turpe, ita passim Theologi; & probatur, quia tunc est con-

formis sua regula, nam illud iudicium est proxima regula quam sequi debet voluntas. Becan. T. 1.

Theod. Schol. Pr. 2. Tract. 1. c. 4. q. 7. p. 219. x — Neminem obligat tamen ligat — Durand. lib.

2. dist. 39. q. 9. p. 443. Sect. 7. b Sylvester in l. 1. Sent. p. 239. c Nihil licet contra Consci-

entiam agere in aliquo casu, nec tamen teneat quilibet sequi Conscientiam suam in quolibet casu,

Gul. Pausanias de vitis & pec p. 280. d Harris Works, Pr. 4. p. 28. e Ribins Obs. c. 47. p. 216.

The violation of Conscience is always evil, and the following of an erring Conscience is evil; but there's a middle way that's safe and good, viz. the informing of Conscience better by God's Word, and following of it accordingly.

The *Causes* of an erring Conscience (besides Original sin, the effect whereof is blindness in the Understanding. And the just judgment of God upon persons for not entertaining, obeying, and loving the truth, as it is in Jesus, besides these, the causes) are reducible to these three Heads:

Causes.

1. *Negligence of learning the Will of God* †, through slothfulness, and love of ease, and low esteem of the ways of God. I need name but one Scripture for both proof and illustration of this particular, *Ecc. 4. 5, 6. The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh. Butter is a handfull with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of Spirit*, q.d. He is a fool that puts himself into a posture of idleness*, that composeth himself to do nothing, that thinks it better to be without good things, than be at some trouble in getting them †.

* Breffer L. 9.

c. 23. p. 556.

Sp. 10m.

† *Discendi*

negligentia

orta ex pigritia

ibid. Sect.

217.

* *Erghth An.*

† *Pemle. in*

loc.

— *Pudeat ig-*

norantem alios

consulere. Et

ab eis doceri.

Bref. *ibid.*

† *Prov. 18. 26.*

Qui sui fides

animi. Stultitia

est. Merc. in

loc.

* *Bref. ibid. &c.*

† *Arch Bishop*

Land. E. Ded.

before the re-

lation of the

Conference.

Cure.

2. *Pride whereby a man is ashamed to consult others, and to be taught by them* *. Those that are sincerely conscientious, are not free from a kind of proud modesty, in being shie of making inquiry into practical cases; there's something of pride in their bashfulness to discover their ignorance, in asking of questions for Conscience-sake. But those that are ungodly, arrogate so much to their own judgement, that (to speak their own boasting) they know as much as any man can teach them. But as wise as they are, a wiser than they calls them † fools, and their folly misleads them.

3. *Passion, or inordinate affection* * about that whereof we are ignorant. This warpeth our consideration, for he that seeks truth with a byas, will run counter when he comes near it, and not find it, though he come within kenning of it †.

You may gather the Remedies from the opposites to these three causes of error. 1. Be industriously diligent to know your duty. 2. Be humbly willing to receive instruction. And 3. Let not your affections out-run your judgment. But there's one rule I shall commend, which if you will conscientiously improve, you shall never be much hurt by an erring Conscience; and I dare appeal to your own Consciences, that 'tis your indispensable duty, you must use it, and 'tis so plain and easie you may use it.

Do what you know, and God will teach you what to do. Do what you know to be your present duty, and God will acquaint you with your future

sumus duty as it comes to be present. Make it your business to avoid
 known commissions, and God will keep you from feared commissions. This
 Rule is of great moment, and therefore I will charge it upon you by ex-
 press Scripture. *Psal. 25. 4. Show me thy ways, O Lord;* i.e. those ways
 wherein I cannot err. *Teach me thy paths,* i.e. that narrow path which
 is too commonly unknown. *those Commands that are most strict and*
difficult. *V. 5. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me,* i.e. teach me evident-
 ly that I may not be deceived; so teach me; that I may not only know
 thy will, but do it. Here's his prayer, but what grounds hath he to ex-
 pect audience? For whom art the God of my salvation, q.d. thou Lord wilt
 save me, and therefore do not refuse to teach me. *On thee do I wait all the*
day, i.e. the whole day, and every day. *other Arguments are couched*
in the following verses, but what answer? *v. 9. The meek will be guide in*
judgment, the meek will be teach his way, i.e. those that submit their neck
 to his yoke, those that are not conceited that they can guide themselves
 better than he can guide them, he will teach them his wayes; in neces-
 sary, great, and weighty matters they shall not err. *Again, Prov. 2. 3. If*
thou cryst after knowledge, and liftst up thy voice for understanding. *v. 4.*
If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures. *v. 5.*
Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of
God. *v. 6. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge*
and understanding. *v. 7. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is*
a buckler to them that walk uprightly. *v. 8. He keepeth the paths of judg-*
ment, and preserveth the way of his Saints. *v. 9. Then shalt thou under-*
stand Righteousness, and Judgment, and Equity, and every good Path. *q.d.*
 Be but as diligent to get knowledge, as a covetous man is to get money; and
 God will certainly give you such knowledge of his wayes, as shall
 preserve you from error; and will teach you how to behave your
 selves both towards God and Man: One Scripture more, that in the
 evidence of three Witnesses, this Rule may be established, *Joh. 7. 17. If*
any man will do his will; he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God,
or whether I speak of my self, q.d. Hinder not your selves from learn-
 ing truth through fear of error; for you shall never want the Spirits
 guidance, while you practically follow his conduct.

n Mandata tua
 ostende, quæ me
 non permittant
 errare, &c.
 Remig. in loc.
 o Semita dista
 quasi semi via
 quia angusta
 calle dirigi-
 tur, nec vulga
 nota est, sed se-
 cultu itipere
 ambulatur.
 Bruno in loc.
 B.P.T. in p. 96
 p Remig. ubi
 sup.
 q Arnob. in loc.
 r In hoc qui
 præcetera vo-
 lunt, quasi se-
 ipfos melius
 regere possint, sed
 eos qui non e-
 rigunt corvi-
 cem, neque re-
 culeant.
 Aug. in loci.
 s Huiusmodi er-
 ror nunquam
 accidit, vel
 error non per-
 minet, de re-
 bus necessariis,
 magnis, &
 gravibus —
 beignus præ-
 Catb. p. 247.
 r Ca. tw. in loc.
 u — Dominus clypeus erit illi, qui perfectam, & omnibus suis numeris constantem contemplationis
 rationem in hisce reconditis divinisque rebus amplecti sine quo ab erroribus tuti servantur, &c. Levi
 Ghetom. in loc. & Eng. Annot. y — Quam perperam & stulte hodie permulti, dum errandi peri-
 culum metuunt, hac trepidatione sese impediunt ab omni discendi studio — si Deo toti in obsequium
 sinu additi, spiritum discretionis ab eo nobis datum ire ne dubitemus qui perpetuus sit dux ac di-
 rector, &c. Calv. in loc. & Gul. Parisien. Qui expresse docet — ubi est invincibilis ignorantia quoad
 nos, Deus succurret, nisi culpa nostrorum opem a nobis avertamus — qua sententia facit maxime ad
 providentiam Dei celebrandam. Davenant determ. q. 45. p. 213.

IV. A doubting Conscience is that which, with trouble and anxiety, spends * its judgment, not knowing which way to determine. Doubtfulness of Conscience is that ambiguity of mind which consists in a standing (or rather in a wavering) ballance, neither assenting nor dissenting to. To speak strictly, a doubting Conscience is no Conscience, but only improperly, as a dead man may be said to be a man. Conscience is a judgment of something done, or to be done: but now where there's no assent, there's no judgment; but a privation of judgement; and therefore so far as it may be called a Conscience, it is an evil Conscience, at best troublesome & evil, and therefore ought to be deposed. Some term the acting upon a doubting Conscience, to be an acting *besides* Conscience; for they cannot be said to act according to Conscience, because 'tis properly none, but *equivocally*; nor do they act *against* Conscience, because Conscience permits them to act thus and no otherwise: those act with or against Conscience, where the judgment of Conscience is determined, to say this is lawful or unlawful, and he acts *besides* Conscience, who remains fluctuating and doubting, whether such a thing be lawful or unlawful; and yet doth, or omits it. Now the Apostle tells us *f*, *Whatsoever is not of Faith is sin*. By Faith there we must understand that *persuasion and security of mind*, whereby we believe and determine, that such a thing *pleaseth or displeaseth* God, is lawful or forbidden; 'tis not spoken of justifying *g* Faith, as if men sinned in eating or not eating, because their sins *were*, or were *not* pardoned; In short, in all Duties that belong to practice, we must be *unweariedly* diligent to perceive the truth, that doubtfulness may be driven away, for the more certain knowledge we have of those things we do, the more *confident* we may be in the doing of them, and the more *joyful* afterwards. What therefore is the cause of doubting, that it may be banished?

The Causes of doubting, which I shall speak of briefly, (to say nothing of our ignorance & weakness) are these two.

1. Either *want*, & *equality* of Reasons; that when we *weigh* and *measure* things most *impartially*, yet we are not able to come to a *determination*, but the mind is still in *suspence*.

I speak of *practical* doubts, for of *Speculative*, that proverbial saying of *Aeneas Silvius* is undeniably true, *Cui plura nescire datum est, eum majora sequi dubia*. *Platina de vit. Pont. Pij. ad l. p. 308.* & Voet. *Sel. disp. pt. 3. p. 326.*

2. Doubts arise from some *peculiar* Reasons. *General* Reasons are

The doubting Conscience.

* Broehm. T. I.

c. 3. q. 3. p. 7.

b. Conscientia

dubia, stricte

negativè ma-

gisque propiè,

nil est aliud,

quam ambigui-

tas, sive su-

spensio animi

constituti in

aquilis, &c.

Bress. l. 4. c. 1.

p. 350.

c. Bress. ibid.

lecty. Vñ

dubia consci-

entia addita

fit dominans

sive alienans,

hanc aliter

quam christi-

one enunciatu-

&c. Voetius.

pt. 3. p. 328.

d. Si non

malitia turpia

saltem iustitia

Voet. ibid.

e. Præter con-

scientiam vero

Ronig. de cons-

vide p. 13. 14.

f. Rom. 14. 23.

g. Minus aug.

Colo. 2. 1. qui

fidem istam

explicant de

fide justifican-

te, & salvifi-

ca, &c. Ronig.

ibid.

not sufficient to make a conscientious doubt; there must be intention of mind upon some particular reasons that must be duly weighed, else we may be said to doubt of what we scarce think of. They have not so good as a doubting Conscience, (and that's a bad one) whose doubts lurk in generals, who have only some cloudy notions from without, or foggy mists from within, which they take no due course to clear. Too many deal with their doubts, as Cripples with their sores, which might easily be healed, but they make them a begging Argument; so the formal Hypocrites have always their doubts and fears (like the Lapwings, cry far enough from her Nest) about things general, or of lesser moment, which they might easily answer, and employ themselves in things more profitable. Shall I tell you how? You cannot expect I should resolve the almost infinite particulars of doubtful cases; but I'll propose two Remedies, which, with the blessing of God upon the conscientious improvement, will give you light for smook, in things both Sacred and Civil.

I Quot modis possit accidere conscientia dubia? Resp. Tot modis posse, quot sunt genera questionum. Azorius Inst. Mor. l. 2. c. 18. p. 135.

Cure. 1. About lesser matters this rule commonly holds good, viz. in things doubtful, take the safest course. In things doubtful ordinarily one way is clear, take that, e.g. I question whether such a recreation be lawful, but I am sure 'tis not unlawful to let it alone; therefore to prevent the after- reckonings of Conscience, I will not meddle with it, but in this will not reach all cases; therefore,

communis. Bress. ibid. l. 4. c. 6. p. 371. sect. 45. 'Tis generally taken to be safest to take that way, (in things controverted) wherein differing parties agree, but that 'tis not always a good rule, See Arch Bishop Law's Conference, p. 283. & seq. In multis particularibus non sanctorum hominum rationem sequi: Sayrus clav. reg. l. 1. c. 13. p. 31. sect. 9.

2. Bring the case to a point, wherein the stress of your doubt lies; but be sure it be a case of Conscience, not of interest, or prejudice, but a case of Conscience, such as you are unservedly willing to be resolved in, that you can in prayer (as it were) bring God a blank to write what he pleaseth. And 2. Pare off all those whirling demurs, and carnal reasonings which may puzzle, but can never satisfy you. These things premised, 3. Write down your case as nakedly as you can, with the grounds of your hesitation: in your writing, make two Columns; on the one side write those Reasons you judge cogent [for] on the other side, the Reasons you judge of moment [against] that whereof you doubt: compare these together, and prize them impartially, you will find that your

your perplexed thoughts have another aspect when written, than when floating, and that your own Ink will ordinarily kill this Tetter; plainly your selves will be able to resolve your own doubts: but if not, this will ripen the Boil, where it doth not break and heal it, you will be ready for advice*. In your consulting of others, do it with expressions equivalent to those of the Jews to Jeremy, (but with more sincere affections) Jer. 42. ver. 2. — *Pray for us unto the Lord thy God.* — Ver. 3. *That the Lord thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.* — Ver. 5. *The Lord be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not,** according to all things, for the which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us. Ver. 6. *Whether it be good, or whether it be evil,* (i. e. seem it never so disadvantageous or dangerous to us) we will obey the voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee, that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the Lord our God. But because we have none can give infallible decision, therefore refer your case to those that are likely to give a different resolution, and thereby you will see how much is to be allowed to humane passion: request them to write the grounds of their Determination; then compare these together, especially the Scriptures and Reasons. If you cannot out of these collect a satisfying resolution, (yet the case will be brought into a narrower compass) be unwearied therefore to take the same course again, apply your selves to the same persons, or others; [one] case thus thorowly resolved, will be singularly useful for the scattering of all future doubts in all other cases: And though this may prove a business of time, yet suspend your acting* till you are satisfied: though the duty in question be of greatest moment, yet while you can approve your heart unto God, that 'tis neither love of sin nor ease, 'tis neither slighting of Christ nor duty, but a restless inquisitiveness to know God's mind in the case, your suspense (at the worst) will be reckoned among your infirmities, and be compassionately overlooked. Can there be any thing of greater moment, than to doubt of Christ's resurrection? yet while Thomas † doubted merely for want of evidence, Christ graciously condescends in a non-such manner to give him satisfaction. To conclude this, whereto* ye have already attained, walk by rule exactly; and if in any thing you be doubtfully minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

* Vide Sayr: Clav. Reg. Ibidem. sect. 6, & 7.

* Jer. 42. 5. &c. Expressum est juramentum quo dicitur, Testis est Deus, quam quo dicitur, Juro, quia illud replicat rationem juramenti, &c. Estius in loc.

* Contra legem charitatis in Deum facit is qui cum dubium animi habeat, nihil omnium operatur — alius ad sui bonitatem rectam cognitionem rei agendæ requiritur. Azor. Instit. mor. l. 2. c. 13. pag. 135.

† John 20. 27, 29. * Phil. 3. 15, 16.

V. A scrupulous Conscience, is that which doth determine a thing to be lawful, The scrupulous Conscience.

† Statuit rem lawful, †, yet scarcely to be done, lest it should be unlawful. There's some aliquam esse anxiety, reluctancy, and fear in the determination. A scruple in the mind is licitum, sed i- as gravel * in the Shoe, it vexeth the Conscience, as that hurts the foot. A deo in effectum scruple is a hovering kind of fearfulness, arising from light † Arguments minus dedu- that binder or disturb the Soul in performances of Duties. cendam, quia

scrupulus ali- The difference between a doubting Conscience and a scrupulous Con- quis, qui auxi- science, is this; A doubting Conscience, assents to neither part of the am reddat con- question; a scrupulous Conscience, consents but with some vexation. scientiam, ne forsitan res ista sit illicita, Konig. de conf. p. 14. * Scrupulus diminutivum à scrupus, lapis est qui in calceos. Hinc metaphorice significat similem afflictionem animæ seu conscientia, 1 Sam. 24. 31. non eris in scrupulum cordis, &c. I. rell. de conf. 16. c. 1. p. 162. † Amel. Ibidem p. 16.

Causes. I shall name but two Causes (forbearing to mention our ignorance and pride) which have a great influence upon all kind of Error, Doubts, and

Scruples. 1. The first cause of scrupulousness is natural *, viz. a cold complexi- on, which is alwayes timorū; those that are phlegmatick and melan- cholly, are naturally fearful; and the reason is, that through the de- feat of natural heat, the spirits about the heart are as it were congealed, and the heart is self is straitned; whence by way of sympathy, the ima- gination hath sad apprehensions of things, and such persons are pusilla- nimous and fearful.

2. The second and the chief cause is temptations. Satan, if he cannot keep the heart a secure Prisoner, he'l do his utmost to overwhelm it with fears and jealousies, and he sutes his temptations according to our temper †. He doth not tempt the riotous with rewards, nor the glutton to the glory of abstinence; he doth not tempt the coward to strive for victories, nor the passionate to fearfulness; he doth not tempt the melancholly to security, nor the phlegmatick to great achievements. A due consideration thereof, of our natural temper, would mend our spiritual.

1. The first remedy I shall commend to you, is this, viz. Be not discouraged with your scruples: 'Pray' keep off from the other extreame, do not indulge them, they naturally tend to much spiritual damage; They 1. are occasions of sin. 2. They render the wayes of God more strait, horrid, and impossible. 3. They retard the work of Grace. 4. They hinder chearfulness in the Service of God. 5. They quench the Spirit. 6. They unfit us for any Duty. These may all serve for Arguments to strive against them: But yet, be not discouraged, for God is pleased

through

through *over-powering* grace to make good use of them. 1. To further mortification. 2. To restrain us from worldly vanities. 3. To abate pride, and promote humility. 4. To make us more watchful. 5. To make us strive to be more spiritual. 6. To (little less than) *force* us to live more upon Christ: but you must take the *other* rule, if you would have these benefits.

2. *Do what possibly you can to get* rid of your Scruples: but if you cannot get rid of them, act against them.* Tis not only lawful, but necessary, to go against a scrupulous Conscience, or you will never have neither grace nor peace. Should a Christian forbear *praying, or receiving* the Sacrament, every time his scrupulous Conscience tells him, he had better *wholly* omit the duty, than perform it in *such* a manner, you would soon find, to your sorrow, the mischief of your Scruples, but grace will not leave him to his scrupulous humour. Be resolute therefore, and tell the Devil, *That as you do not perform your duty at his command, so neither will you omit it at his bidding.* Do by religious Duties, as they that are afraid to go by *water*, or to go over a *narrow* Bridge, they cease to fear when they have gone often over: so by the performance of duties, your scrupulous fears will vanish. Act against your scruples, 1. *Positively*, by disputing them down, and opposing their reasons. 2. *Negatively*, by slighting of them, and not hearkning to them. In short, *In all necessary known duties; alwayes do what you can, when you can't do what you would.*

VI. The *trembling* Conscience is that which is *disquieted**, and distressed with the (apprehended) *hazard* of the Soul's condition, that doth nothing but *accuse*, and *condemn*, and *afright* the Soul. This, of any, needs least enlargement, for every one that feels it, is rhetorical enough in expressing it.

digged, and the Philistines stopped them with earth, Gen 26. 30. Ob peccatum ut in aqua canosa & turbida, nemo potest in ea vultum suum contemplari. B.P.T 4. p. 769.

There's a *twin cause* of a trembling Conscience, viz. Sense of *sin**, Cause, and fear of *wrath†*. Never *sin* like mine! never *heart* like mine! never *like mine!* Such are the constant complaints of a troubled spirit. I'll not now with that *horror* of Conscience that follows *profligates* retches; I shall speak something of it toward the close, no-
curret—nullus sui asylum habet. Eufr. Nie'emberg de arc. vol. 1. 2. p. 158.

Cure, I can give but hints. Never keep the Devils Counsel. Break through all carnal Reasoning; to acquaint your selves with some

faithful spiritual Physician, or experienced Christian, that may shew you the methods of divine Grace, and what others * have successfully done that have been just in your condition. This premised,

1. *Notwithstanding* (yea in the midst of) your *saddest* complaints, *Bless God for an awakened Conscience, while there's hope of cure.* It is a good rule, Be not too quick in administering *comforts*; but we cannot be too quick in provoking * to *thankfulness*. If you can at *present* be thankful that you are out of Hell, you shall e're *long* be thankful for assurance of Heaven. This Rule may seem strange, but (upon *experience*) its practice will discover its excellency.

2. Observe, 'tis God's *usual* method to bring the Soul through these *perplexities* to the most *solid* spiritual peace. *Augustine* * excellently expresseth his *spiritual* conflict, how God followed him with *severe* mercy, till he made him instant for *thoroughness*. God kept him *trembling*, that he might leave *dallying* in soul-concernments. Believe it Christian, God is now *storing* thee with experiences, which will be a useful *treasury* throughout thy life. Therefore,

— Instabat tu in occultis meis Domine se- vera misericordia, flagella ingeminans timoris & pudoris, ne rursus cessarem, jam penè faciebam & non faciebam: — sentiebam me ab iniquitatibus teneri, & iactabam voces miserabiles: quamdiu, quamdiu cras & cras? quare non modo, quare non hac hora finis turpitudinis meæ? — Aug. Conf. l. 9. c. 11, 12.

3. Do but hold on * in the *vigorous* use of all means of Grace, and reckon God's keeping thee from turning thy back upon his wayes, when thou hast no comfort in them, the *secret* supports he gives, which thou takest no notice of; count these for *evidences*, that the Spirit is at work in thy heart; and for *pledges*, that he will perfect his own work. *e. g.* Count thy *growing* importunity in prayer, (or sorrowful complaint for the want of it) a *gracious* answer of *that* prayer, which thou thinkest is *disregarded*. Count thy *watching* for a word to *direct* and *support* thee, a *notable* efficacy of that word, which thou countest doth thee no good. Count thy *restless* dissatisfaction with every thing on this side God, to be a *love-token* from God, to assure thee that God will be thy *satisfying* portion; and in the *interim*, ask those *well grown* Christians that are now in the *spiritually sensible* embraces of divine Love, whether they are not glad that God formerly took that course with them, which he now takes with thee, to bring them to these joys. Be encouraged therefore, though thou hast a sorrowful † Seed-time, thou shalt have a joyful Harvest.

Nihil tibi utilius fore scias, quam ut cum profunda quadam ac forti resignatione te ipsum Deo humiliter resignes in omnibus, quæ tibi evenerint. Si ve dulcia ea fuerint, si ve amara, si ve delectent, si ve eruciant, ita ut dicere possis: O Deus adorande etiam si in hac vita istaq; pressura ad extremum usque judicii diem permanendum mihi foret, te tamen haudquaquam deferere vellem, sed constanter perpetuòque tibi adhaerere, &c. I haue in bistor. vit. p. 16. † Psal. 126. 5, 6.

Thus

Thus having spoken of those kinds of Conscience that are either *evil* or *troublesome*, and how to cure them. I now come to those desirable kinds of Conscience, that next to *Deity* and *Heavenly Glory*, admit no *hyperbole* in their commendation, *viz.* the good *honest* Conscience, and the good *peaceable* Conscience, and how to obtain them.

VII. That Conscience is *good*, in respect of its *integrity*, which gives a right judgment of every thing, according to the Word of God. I grant, that the Law of *Nature* binds *k*, *Ecclesiastical* Laws bind *l*, and *Political* Laws bind *m*, but the *Word* of God is the *principal* Rule *n*, which *precisely* binds the Conscience in regard of its Author *o*; *There is one Law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy. Fear p not them which kill the body, and are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell.*

The good honest Consc.

k Rom. 2. 14.

l Mat. 23. 2, 3.

m Rom. 13. 5.

n *Norma principalissima* &c.

o Konig. p. 3. 14.

p James 4. 12.

p Mar. 10. 28.

VIII. That Conscience is a good *peaceable* Conscience that excuseth *q*, absolveth *r*, and comforteth *s* as it ought, that Conscience that's pacified *t* by the Blood of Christ, that doth, as *Moulin** relates of a dying man, to whom some say the Devil appeared, and shewed him a Parchment, that was very long, wherein was written, on every side, the sins of the poor sick man, which were many in number: and that there were also written the idle words he had spoken, which made up three quarters of the words that he had spoken in his life — and his actions digested according to the Commandments: Whereupon Satan said, *Seest thou? behold thy Vertues, see here what thine Examination shall be:* Whereunto the poor sinner answered, *It is true Satan; but thou hast not set down all; for thou shouldest have added, and set down here below, The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all our sins; and this also should not have been forgotten; That whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting Life.* But how shall we get such Consciences? Christians, be but perswaded to practise *these* (or *such*) directions, and your Consciences will *certainly* be right, and *seasonably* be comfortable.

Good quiet Conscience.

q 1 Cor. 4. 4.

r Heb. 10. 2.

s 2 Cor. 1. 12.

t Heb. 9. 14.

* *Moulin*, the

comfort of a

Communi-

cant, p. 37.

I. Take heed of *every* sin *†*, count no sin small *x*. *Scrue* up your *†* obedience to *every* *y* Command to the highest. *Ferret* out every sin to the *z* most *secret* *z* corruption. When you have set your watch against the *first* *y* risings of sin, beware of the *borders* of sin, shun the very *b appearance* of *evil*. Venture not upon occasions *c* or temptations to sin; those that dare venture upon occasions, as Children upon the Ice *d*, shall

† 2 Cor. 8. 2. 11.

z Mat. 5. 27.

z 22, 27, 28.

y Mar. 22.

37, 38.

c Rom. 7. 7.

d: Thel 5. 23.

c Proverbs 49.

d Prov. 7. 26.

15, 27. *Facile agitur quod libenter auditur.* Bern. de inter. dom. pag. 1082. Numb 15. 2.

find

Confessio pec-
cari confessio
est desinendi,
&c.
Hilar., in Psal
137. P. 595.

III. Compose thy self to live as under Gods eye, live as in the (more than) sensible presence of the jealous God. Remember, all things are naked and bare before him, you cannot deceive him, for he is infinite Wisdom; you cannot fly from him, for he is every where; you cannot bide him, for he is Righteousness itself. Keep therefore fresh apprehensions of God in your thoughts; speak, as knowing God hears you; walk

walk as knowing, * God is nearer to you than you are to your selves. *Talem te pre-*
The Lord is with you, while you are with him, i. e. you shall enjoy his para, ut tecum
favourable presence, while you live in his awful presence. There's one adsit Deus: sit
Psalms, which 'twere well if Christians would do by it, as Pythagoras || by in ore: sit in
his golden precepts, every morning and evening repeat it; 'tis David's corde: semper
appeal of a good Conscience unto God, against the malicious suspi- tecum eat: te-
cions and calumnies of men. [Do you but thus presentiate God un- cum redeat:
to your selves, and God will attest your integrity] Psal. 139. v. 1. O nec recedat a
Lord, thou hast searched me and known me, q. d. O Lord, thou art the te. Nunquam
heart-searching God, who perfectly knows all the thoughts, counsels, illote dimittit,
studies, endeavours and actions of all men, and therefore mine; ver. 2. nisi prior illū
Thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising, thou understandest my dimiseris, ubi-
thought afar off, q. d. thou knowest my rest and motion, and my plod- cinque fueris,
ding thoughts of both o. ver. 3. Thou compassedst my path, and my lying nunquam solus
down, and art acquainted with all my ways, q. d. thou fannest and esse poteris, si
winnowest me, i. e. thou discussest and tryest me to the utmost p. ver. 4. Deus tecum e-
For there is not a word in my tongue, but loe, O Lord, thou knowest it al- rit. Bern. de
together; q. d. I cannot speak a word, though never so secret, obscure, or int. dom. p. 1065
subtile, but thou knowest what, and why, and with what mind 'twas c. 5. & 1091.
uttered q. ver. 5. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand c. 66.
upon me; q. d. Thou keepst me within the compass of thy knowledge, 2 Chron. 15. 2
like a man that will not let his Servant go out of his sight. I cannot break || — Refert
away from thee ver. 6. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, Galenus reci-
I cannot attain unto it; q. d. The knowledge of thy great and glorious cisse se sub ini-
Majesty and Infiniteness, is utterly past all humane comprehension. rium q. finem
ver. 7. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy cujusque dici.
Presence? q. d. Whither can I flee from thee, whose Ess-ence, Presence, Echmannus
and Power is every where. ver. 8. If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art Epil. Edit. p. 15
there: if I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there; q. d. There's no n Mo len in lo-
height above thee, there's no depth below thee. ver. 9. If I take the o Estus in loc.
wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the Sea; q. d. If I p Ainsw. in loc.
had wings to fly as swift as the morning light s, from the east to the west, q Tisin in loc.
that I could in a moment get to the furthest parts of the world. ver. 10. r Nulla altitu-
Even there shall thy hand lead me: and thy right hand shall hold me; q. d. dote altior:
Thence shall thy hand lead me back, and hold me fast like a fugitive r. nullum pro-
ver. 11. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me: event the night shall be fundum te pro-
light about me, q. d. Though darkness hinders mans sight, it doth not thine. fundus. Hie-
In a word, look which way you will, there's no hiding place from God. ron, in loc.
Job 34. 21, 22. For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his f Aurora solis
goings; there is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of sin- pronuncia, mo-
iniquity. mento totum
*hemisphaerium
pervadin. Me-
nech. in loc.
D: ducat —
tanebit ut so-
lent tenebri su-
gitiui. Sa.*

iniquity may hide themselves. Therefore Christians, do nothing but what you are willing God should take notice of, and judge in your selves whether this be not the way to have a good and quiet Conscience?

Πῶς ἀποφύγετε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐνυπόκρισιν; Pyth.

tha. *aur. prac.*

n. 42. p. 9.

† — Somnus

quàm iran-

quillus, altus

ac liber, cum

aut laudatus

est animus, aut

admonitus, &

Speculator sui

censorque se-

cretus cognos-

cit de moribus

suis? uter hac

potestare, &

quotidie apud

me causam di-

co. Cum subla-

tum è conspe-

ctu lumen est,

& conicitur

uxor moris

jam mei con-

scia, totum di-

em mecum

servitor falsa

ac dicta mea

remetior, nihil

mibi ipse ab-

secondeo, nihil

transeo: quare

animi quicquam

ex erroribus

meis timeam,

cum possum di-

cere: vide ne

istud amplius

facio, nunc ti-

bi ignosco, &c.

Senec. de ira.

1.3 c. 36 p. 599

* Pemble. p.

§ 14

† Pl. 119. 59.

IV. Be serious and frequent in the examination of your heart and life. This is so necessary to the getting and keeping of a right and peaceable Conscience, that 'tis impossible to have either without it. There are some Duties and Graces, like those parts of the body, that may supply the defect of other parts; or like some Drugs in Physick, which when they can't be had, some of the like nature may serve: but this is like those, the defect whereof nothing else can supply. The Heathens have grop't out this rule by the *Gloworm* light of Nature. *Pythagoras* gives it as a *Precept**; and *Seneca* backs it by examples † of *Sextius*, who every night, before he composed himself to sleep, asked himself, What evil hast thou this day healed? What vice hast thou resisted? Wherein art thou better? O how sweet is that sleep which follows such a recognition of himself, who made every night a scrutiny into the words and deeds of the whole day, he would neither pass by, nor hide any thing from himself; he so ript up his faults, that he would not pardon them to himself, without a self-charge nor to repeat them. Have you gone thus far? Certainly, my Brethren, not to out-strip them is inexcusable. It is a shame* to see the carelessness of most, that are better acquainted with any thing than themselves; there are many that know the histories of a thousand years past, and yet cannot tell you the particulars of their own lives; Men well acquainted with the mysteries of Arts and Nature, but utterly ignorant of the secrets of their own Souls. How few are there amongst us, that can say with David †, I have thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies? Nay, we have a thousand matters to think on all the day long the night too; the week, the year; but who questions with his own heart, What am I? What do I? How live I? Is the course I follow good and lawful? Is that which I omit, my duty, or not? Is God my friend? Am I his? What hope have I of Heaven? Say, I die to-morrow, to day, this very hour, where is my assurance I shall be saved? What Apologie can I make against the accusations of Satan and my Conscience? Will Christ be mine Advocate, when I shall stand in judgment? Have I grace, or have I none? Do I grow in grace, or do I decay? Am I better this year than I was the last? What sins have I conquered now, that held me in combat then? What graces have I obtained now, that I had not then? Christians do you do thus? If you do, that is not enough, unless you do it frequently, daily. Every evening ere you sleep,

sleep, review *e* your carriage in the day, what you have *done*, or *spoke*, or *thought*, that is but so much as *indecent*. Whether your hearts have been *intent* upon Religion, and *indifferent* to the world. Briefly, have special care of two portions *f*, of your times, viz. *Morning* and *Evening*; the morning to *fore-think* what ought to be done, and the evening to *examine*, whether you have done what you ought.

ἡ ἡμέρα πρὸς τὸ ποιεῖν, ἡ ἑσπέρια τῶν ἀναμνηστικῶν, ἡ λογικὴ τοῦ καὶ διανοητικῶν, ἡ ἀπὸ τῆς συνύλης παύσις, &c. Basil. T. 2. p. 514: f Crocius Syn. p. 1212. ex allis.

V. Be *much* in prayer *g*, in all *manner* of *b* prayer, but especially in *secret* *i* prayer. Do not non-suit your selves by the love of *sin*, and you shall certainly be heard when you pray for *Grace* *k*: believe it Christian, 'tis not thine *inevitable* *l* weakness, nor thy *sensible* dulness *m*, nor thy *lamented* roivings *n*, nor thy *opposed* distractions *o*, nor thy *mistaken* unbelief *p*; it is not any, nor all these can shut out thy Prayers, if thou dost not regard *q* iniquity in thy heart; therefore be encouraged, 'tis the voice of your beloved that saith *r*, *Verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing* (to what you might ask) *in my name: Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.* But this and the two next rules will be spoken to in the following Cases, I shall therefore but little more than name them.

VI. Let every action have reference unto your whole life, and not unto a part only *s*; propose some end to your selves in every thing *t*, and let all your lesser and subordinate ends be plainly reducible unto the great end of your living. The emphasis of the Apostles Exhortation is very great *u*, *Exercise thy self unto godliness*, *q. d.* Be as diligent in Religion, as thou wouldst have thy children that go to School to be in Learning. Or thus; let thy whole life be a preparation for heaven, like the wrestlers or combatants preparation for victory. Or thus; strip thy self of all incumbrances that thou mayest attend unto piety: Pleasures may tickle thee for a while, but they have an *heart-aking* farwell. Thou mayest call thy riches *goods*, but within a few days what *good* will they do thee? Men may *flatter* thee for thy Greatness, but with God thy *account* will be the greater. Therefore *alwaies* mind that, which will *alwaies* be advantage.

in summum cacumen, deinde in imum inanes aguntur—domum cum super vacua redeunt: lassitudine, jurant nefcisse se istos, quare exierint. Seneca de Tranquil. c. 12. p. 685: u 1 Tim. 4. 7. γυμναζεσθαι εστὶν ὡς ἐν γυμνασίῳ εἰς τὸν ἀγῶνα προετοιμασθαι. Grot. in loc.

VII. Live *more* upon *Christ* than upon *inherent* Grace. Do not venture

E

ture

ε Πρὸς τὴν ἀναμνηστικὴν ἀναμνηστικὴν ἀποστολὴν τὸ σωματικὸν εἶναι τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἑσπέριαν

g Psal. 109. 4
o Eph. 6. 1
i Mat. 6. 6
k Heb. 4. 16
l 2 Cor. 12. 10
m Mar. 14. 38
n Psal. 86. 11
o Gen. 15. 11
p 1 Joh. 5. 12
q Psal. 66. 18
r Joh. 16. 23, 24.

f Episc. Inst. theol. l. 1. c. 1. p. 3. g Si aliquem excentem domo interrogaveris: quomodo, quid cogitas? respondet tibi: non Mehercule scio, sed aliquos videbo, aliquid agam, —cursus est, qualis formicis per arbuta reptibus: quod

ture upon sin because Christ hath purchased a pardon, that's a most horrible and impious abuse of Christ: For this very reason there was no sacrifice under the Law for any wilful wickedness, lest people might think they knew the price of sin; as those do that truck with Popish indulgences and Pardons. But that none may be overwhelmed with the over-sense of their unworthiness, be it known to you, *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*, and our salvation is better, safer, more for Gods Glory, and our comfort, in his hand than in ours.

VIII. Be every way nothing in your own Eyes; 'tis the humble soul that thrives exceedingly, and alas what have we to be proud of? Look we either at our constitution, or conversation; our conception sinful, our birth peccal, our life toylsome, and our death we know not what; but all this is nothing to the state of our soul. A *Savick* could give this rule, that if any one tell you of anothers speaking evil of thee, do not excuse thy selfe, but say, he did not know me, or else he would have spoken worse. A Convert, when he once comes to be sensible of sin, sees more cause to be weary of his life, than proud of his graces. To rise and fall, confess sin and commit it; to see others out-run us, that set out after us; to recover that time for communion with God, which we trifle away in unobserved impertinencies; Surely for such persons to be low and vile in their own eyes, deserves not to be called humility, though the contrary be worse than devilish pride. Be perswaded therefore, to believe of your selves in the use of *Agurs* (some suppose *Solomons*) words of himself, *Pro. 30. 2.* Surely I am more bruisish than my man; *Ec. 9. d.* I do not make use of my reason, *ver. 3.* I have not the knowledge of the holy. *q. d.* my knowledge of holy mysteries is very little; in comparison of my ignorance, nothing. Be as willing that others should speak ill of you, as you are to speak ill of your selves: and be as unwilling that others should commend a you, as you are to commend yourselves.

Epictetus c. 48. p. 270. Simp. com. a Multos vidisse qui poterint perferre multa incommoda in corpore et fortunis, qui autem poterint continere laudes suas neminem. *Luther. T. 4. p. 149. com. in Gal. ca. 4.*

IX. Entertain good thoughts of God b what ever he doth with you, whatever he requires of you, what ever he laies upon you c. We never

1 Cor. 13. 12. *Εἰδὼς ὅτι τὸ κρῖνον αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ὁ Θεὸς ὁποῦντος ἐν τῇ αἰνῇ, ὡς ὅταν, ἢ στοιχεύων τὰ θεακῶν, ἢ δικαίως ἢ σαυῶν οἱς τὸ κατὰ χάριν, τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ, ἢ αἰνῶν πάσι τοῖς γυναικῶν καὶ ἀνδράσιν ἐκείνη, ὡς ὅταν τῆς αἰνῆς γυναικὸς ἐκτελεσθῇ ἡ γὰρ ἐκτελεσθῇ αὐτὴ τοῖς τοῖς, ἢ ἐκτελεσθῇ, ὡς ἀμελῶς, &c. *Epist. c. 38. Simpl. p. 212.**

arrive

arrive to any considerable holiness, or peace, till we lose d our selves in Deity, till our understandings be fill'd with admiration, till our wills be in a sober sense, divine: till our affections be, in a spiritual sense, transported. When we can at once unridle Gods methods of grace, & make good constructions of Gods methods of Providence, making a spiritual improvement of both, then we are not far from being universally and exactly conscientious, there's yet one thing wanting, and that's implied in this, but it must be eminently express'd.

X. Do all you do out of love to God. Spiritual love-sickness is the souls healthfullest constitution. When love to God is both Cause, Means, Motive and End of all our activity in the business of Religion, then the soul is upon the wing towards its rest. Then is our love to other things regular, when the alone goodness of God moves us to love them; as the alone respect to health makes me use physick, the means hath no proper goodness distinct from the goodness of the end; those means which were profitable, though they remain un-changed in themselves, yet they become unprofitable by the alone change of the end, e. g. Health being recovered, physick is unprofitable, which while we were infirm was profitable; so we are not to love any means without relation to the end, because 'tis contrary to the purity of that love which we owe to God for we ought so to love God, that with him, or under him we love nothing else, but all things only in him, because otherwise we do not love him without our whole heart. e. g. In mens loving their wives, and wives their husbands; in Parents loving their children, and children their Parents, 'tis a rare pitch to love all these in God; that is, to advance our love to God by them, and so far as any of them draw off our love to God, to say to them as Christ to Peter, *Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence unto me.* Love is extended to good; the more good therefore any thing is, the more it is to be beloved. But thou O Lord my God (saith Bradwardine. f.) art the Good of every good, good above all things that are good, a good most infinitely infinite: how much therefore should I rationally love thee? should not my love be proportionably infinite? I would I could so love thee: but how shall I that am so very little and finite love thee infinitely! And yet without so loving thee, how will there be kept any due proportion in loving thee, who dost infinitely exceed all other lovely things? I ought to love thee infinitely as to the manner, though I cannot as to the act of my love, i. e. I ought to love thee finally for thy self, or else I may love thee in some sort infinitely, as to the Act, both intensively and extensively, in some sort intensively, i. e. more intensely, more firmly, more strongly than any finite good, because I love them but for thee. In some sort extensively, by

Hoc est totum dei voluntate conformitatem dei conscientiam habere nimirum, nos totos esse offerendo, ut quodcumque quodcumque quodcumque ipse voluerit, de nobis fiat ac statuar, id est sine ulli exceptione, et contradictione, et nihil propositus nobis referendo. Rodericus, exerc. perfect. p. 1. et 2. c. 14 p. 355. e. i. a sola bonitas dei movet ad amorem charitatis erga Deum, solummodo in se sanctitatis movet ad utendum potione medicinali quia voluntati obsequium sit aut finis aut medium, hoc ob solum finem appetit, media quae media, dicuntur tantum relationem ad finem, non autem sumpsit meum ipsum, tum quia contraria est puritati omnium, quo deo inherere debemus. I. a enim, aut passim apud solidiores comparat vira spiritualis

magistro vide-
re est, amare
debemus; deum
ut cum illo, et
an sub illo nihil
aliud amemus;
sed omnia duntaxat in illo;
quia alias non
amamus illum
ex toto corde,
sed aliud quid-
piam ab illo oc-
cupat cur no-
strum.

Gibieu. de lib.
dei et creat. l. 1.
c. 11. p. 66.

Ita autem Do-
mine deus me-
us et omnis boni
bonum, super
omnia bona bo-
nus, bonum infi-
nitissime infini-
tum—quo-
modo tantum
plus amabo te,
quam tu amas
me, quantum tu
es melior me?
debeo amare te
finaliter propter
te, et omnia alia propter te, tu autem non amas me propter me, nec cetera propter me—debeo etiam amare te
infinite quodammodo inter se supra quodcumque bonum finitum, tu autem non sic amas me. Debeo quoque a-
mare te infinite quodammodo extensivè, volendo scilicet prout quicunque et quantacunque bona alia, etiam et
me ipsum non esse quam te, vel quam te semel offendere, tu vero non sic amas me, quia non debet sic amari, &c.
Bradwardin. de causa dei. l. 2. c. 34. p. 629. & seqq.

g Nec vi extin-
guatur nec
fraude, adeo al-
it inhaeret ani-
mo tantissimus

licet homi sit,
tamen securus non est, ipsa tenebras nequitia, imitata omnia timet, multas fortuna liberat
peccata, metu nimirum. Exemplo sunt potentissimi Imperatores, et qui arcani licentiam nulli, sine arbitris, sine
testibus, &c. Episc. Instit. theol. p. 1. c. 3. p. 10, 11. ipsa conscientia propriis stimulis agitur atque com-
pungitur, et sui ipsa efficitur accusatrix et testis, Origen. in epist. ad rom. l. 2. c. 11. p. 707.

comparing all things, how many, or how great soever with thee, and loving thee
before, and above all, that I had rather all things in the world, and my self
too to have no being, than once to offend thee. But Lord thou love st thy friends
in an unspeakable manner more than they can love thee. O therefore thou
great Lord, thou great Good, that fillest heaven and earth, why dost thou
not fill my very little soul? O my soul that art so little, so miserable, why
dost thou not open all thy little doors? why dost thou not extend thy utmost ca-
pacity, that thou mayst be wholly passest, wholly satiated, wholly ravished
with the sweetness of so great love: especially, seeing thou art so very little,
yet nothing less will satisfy thee. O therefore my most loving God, I beseech
thee tell me what may most effectually draw out my love to thee, considering
what privation of love, what privative, positive good things I receive from
thee, infinite in greatness, infinite in multitude: It is a wonder that any one can
think of these things and not be wholly swallowed up of love, wholly turned into
love: But I see, Lord, 'tis easier to speak these things, and to write them
down, than to do them. Thou therefore most good and most powerful Lord to
whom nothing is difficult, give I beseech thee, that I may more easily do these
things in my heart, than utter them with my mouth: Open, I beseech thee, thy
most bountiful hand, and enable me, that nothing may be more easie, nothing
more sweet, nothing more delightful, than most effectually, and most affectio-
nately to fulfil that which I speak about loving of thee. Lord give me leave a
little to presume above my hope, and to plead with thee about thy magnificent
goodness: humane friendship will not give the repulse to a poor, wanting, beg-
ging friend; O therefore most liberal Lord, help me that I may love thee.
Christians, 'tis worth while to make it your business to climb up to this
love extasie. This you will find to be a compleating rule, an effectual
means, and a singular exercise of exact and conscientious walking.

I shall briefly name (I intended largely to have prest) two arguments
or motives to perswade the use of these directions.

1. You cannot possibly get rid of your Conscience; therefore be
perswaded to get a good one, there's nothing more common than for

wicked

wicked men to do what they can to extinguish Conscience, they *flatter* it with carnal reasoning; they *bribe* it with mock devotions, they *wound* it with bawny provocations; they *scar* it with customary wickedness, they *trample* it under foot by sinning in despite of it; they *run* away from it, and will not endure to hear it, by diversions; and yet they can sooner turn their souls out of their bodies, than Conscience out of their Souls: yea, amongst all these indignities, it's as fresh, and active, as if it were not thus abused, it doth but watch it's opportunity, when it will be heard; when 'twill make that which was done perhaps forty years ago, as if it had been but yesterday. What ayles the great Emperours of the world *h*, that *cause* their terror in the land of the living, what ayls them to tremble with inward contrition? is it a vain fear? why then do they not shake it off? is it the fear of men? No, they are above humane punishments: Is it the fear of shame? no, the sin perhaps, was secret, at least man knows not the inward conternation of their spirits. What's the matter? O they are haunted by the fury of their own Consciences, Would wicked men but blab the gripes they sometimes feel, even then when they out-face a Ministerial or friendly reproof, there would need no more to be said to evidence, that a Conscience you will have, which will first or last do its office.

h Insigne visum est eorum Caesaris literarum initium; nam his verbis exorsus est. Quid scribam vobis P. C. aut quomodo scribam aut quid omnino non scribam hoc tempore. Dii me deorū pejus perdant quam perire quotidie sentio, si scio. Ad. d. facinora atque flagitia sua ipsi quoque in sup-

plicium verterant.—Tiberium non fortuna, non solitudines protegabant. Tacit. Annal. l. 6. c. 6. p. 149.

2. Your own Conscience will be your *best* friend, or your *greatest* enemy (of any creature) unto eternity. There's no greater riches, no greater *pleasure*, no greater *safety* than a good conscience. Let the pressures of the body, the hurry of the world, the affrightments of Satan be never so great, they can't reach the Conscience. A good Conscience singularly cheers the *dying* body, joyfully accompanies unto God the *departed* Soul; triumphingly presents both Soul and body unto the *desired* Tribunal. There's no more profitable *means*, nor *surer* testimony, nor eminent *Conveyor* of eternal happiness than a good Conscience. And on the contrary, there is no greater torment than of an evil Conscience: though its *gentler* checks may be disregarded, its *louder* clamours will make you tremble. O Sirs, what will you do, when Conscience shall upbraid you with your *abuse* of mercies, *incorrigibleness* under judgments, *contempt* of Christ, and *hatred* of holiness? you can't now endure to hear what Conscience hath to say, how will you endure it unto eternity? if one that killed his own Father *k*,

i Vide Bern. de inter. dom. c. 22. p. 1070.

k Parricidium vindicaturus Paulus pro flagitii dignitate, nullum balneum tottura ingenti, nec per ducerunt; non cultum, non vivum comburunt: scilicet, quid cogitarunt, pia, scilicet, matris naturae ferulam conscientiam, adeo summa atrocitas

ratū exemplum doli novam sevitiā didicerunt, parricidam sancientes iriduo cogi spectare occisi cadaver, ut sic puniretur enormissimo omnium supplicio, admonitione facinoris. Jo. Euf. Nicreimb de art. vol. 1. p. 150.

could

could not in some *Egyptians* account be more cruelly punished, than by being compelled to behold the murdered body for *three daies*, what a torment will it be to be forced to behold *every sin*, with every *aggravation* unto eternity? here in bodily sickness there's some *intervalls* to revive the Spirits; but hereafter there will not be a *moments* intermission of unexpressible horror unto eternity. The Conscience shall *roar* under infinite wrath, and the sinner shall be kept from *annihilation* under it by infinite power.

Thus I have in a weak manner performed my promise in speaking to several kinds of Consciences, with *remedies* and *rules* which laid together, will I think amount to sufficient instructions, *How we may be universally and exactly Conscientious*? viz. 1. Get your Consciences *awakened* from their natural Lethargy l. 2. Preserve them tender from acquired *fearedness* m. 3. Rectify their *errors* as you would get cure of blindness n. 4. Resolve their *doubts* as you would a claim to your lands o. 5. Break from your *scruples* as from thieves on the road p. 6. Lay your head in Christs bosom to cure your *trembling* q. And then for the (7.) *integrity*, and (8.) *quiet* of your Consciences. Observe the rules proposed, as Punctually as you would Physicians bills in a tedious sickness. 1. Avoid *sinning* as you would a train of gun-powder r. 2. Be as quick in your *repentance* as in the cure of a Pleurisie f. 3. Live under the apprehended *presence* of the jealous God t. 4. *Examine* you hearts, as Princes sift out treason u*. 5. Pray for *sutable* grace, as starving persons cry for food *. 6. Let every action be as an arrow shot at a mark x. 7. Think of God as of a wise Physician y. 8. Be as *vile* in your own esteem as you are in the eyes of a captious enemy z. 9. Live upon *Christ*, as the child in the womb lives upon the Mother a. 10. Love God (as near as possibly you can) as God loves you b.

But if these rules, though thus *contracted*, be too many, and too long to be always remembered, that you may not be overcharged with that which should never be forgotten: I shall commend to you some (*Spiritually*) chymical extractions, and (if I might so express it) *Spirits* of directions, that may be to your Souls in your *Pilgrimage* toward Heaven, as your Ship-provisions in a *Sea-voyage*, generally sufficient, when others cannot be had. Plainly practise these *memorials* of direction in all your conscientious walking.

I. *Consult duty, not events*. There's nothing in the world for us to do, but to mind our duty. Curious speculation & that tend not to holiness, may be reckoned among your *superfluities*: but mis-giving predictions of what may or will befall you in the discharge of your duty, may be reckoned

11 Cor. 13. 34
m Heb. 3. 13
n Eph. 4. 18
o Rom. 14. 5
p Isa. 35. 3, 4
q Isa. 40. 11
r Job. 18. 15
f Zeph. 2. 2
t Ezck. 11. 5
u Lam. 3. 40
* Pla. 143. 7, 8
z 1 Cor. 10. 31
y Job. 40. 2.
z Eph. 3. 8
a Gal. 2. 20
b Psal. 18. 1, 2
c To the Lord
d To the Lord
e To the Lord
f To the Lord
g To the Lord
h To the Lord
i To the Lord
j To the Lord
k To the Lord
l To the Lord
m To the Lord
n To the Lord
o To the Lord
p To the Lord
q To the Lord
r To the Lord
s To the Lord
t To the Lord
u To the Lord
x To the Lord
y To the Lord
z To the Lord
a To the Lord
b To the Lord

ἡ δὲ αὐτὴ ὥστε
 τὴν δόξαν αὐτῆς
 ἔχουσα αὐτὴν.
 Athan. qu. ad
 Antioch. p. 351
 q. 77.
 ἡ δὲ τὰς ἡμετέρας
 δόξας συμμέλει
 δόξας ὡς ἡμετέρας
 αὐτῆς, ὅτι αὐτὴ
 ὡς ἡμετέρας ὡς ἡμετέρας
 Σωφροσύνης, ἡ
 ἡμετέρας ὡς ἡμετέρας
 ἡμετέρας ὡς ἡμετέρας
 ἡμετέρας ὡς ἡμετέρας
 Epist. c. 51.
 Simp. p. 282.
 m Mic. 4. 5.
 n Heb. 13. 7.
 o 2 Sam. 23.
 39. 23.
 p Rev. 15. 3.
 q 1 Pet. 2. 12, 15.
 r 1 Thes. 1. 7.
 s 1 John 1. 3.
 t Heb. 13. 8.
 u Mar. 1. 25 &
 6. 46. Lu. 6. 12.
 v John 11. 42.
 w Luk. 4. 22.
 x John 7. 46.
 y Mar. 10. 21,
 27.
 z Luk. 24. 17,
 32.
 a Acts 10. 38.
 b John 8. 29.
 c Josh. 2. 18, 21.
 d Acts 9. 6.
 e Rom. 2. 21.
 f Pal. 129. 8.
 g Pal. 123. 2.
 h John 15. 18,
 &c.
 i 1 Pet. 2. 21,
 22, 23.

can't pray over it, and if he would but bestow a *serious* ejaculatory pray-
 er upon every *occurent* action, he would find, that such a prayer would
 cut off all things *sinfull*, demur all things *doubtful*, & encourage all things
lawful. Therefore do nothing but what you can *preface* with prayer. But
 these rules are all defective, I'll therefore close with an *Example* that's
 infinitely above defects.

IV. *Think, and speak, and do what you are persuaded Christ himself*
would do in your case, were he upon the earth. The heathen they proposed
 unto themselves the best examples they had, and therefore let us fol-
 low the best of *m* ours. There are many rare examples in *n* Scripture ;
 but we may say of them, as 'tis said of most of *Dauids* Worthies, whose
 highest commendation was with this diminution *o*, they attained not *un-*
to the first three, I propose therefore neither great nor small, but the *King*
of Saints *p* : it becomes a Christian rather to be an Example *q*, than to
 follow one : But by imitating of Christ, you will come as near as 'tis pos-
 sible to the first three, for your *fellowship* shall be with the *Father*, and with
 his *Son Jesus Christ* *r*, through the spirit of holiness, who alone can teach
 you what it is to abide in *s* Christ, who was, and is, and ever will be our
 absolute copy *r*. O Christians ! how did Christ *pray*, and redeem time for
 prayer *u* ? How did Christ *preach*, out of whose mouth proceeded no
 other but gracious words ***, that his enemies could not but admire him *x* ?
 at what rate did Christ value the *world*, who did and taught to renounce
 it *y* ? what time did Christ spend in *impertinent* discourse, who made
 their hearts *burn within them*, whom he occasionally fell in company
 with *z* ? How did Christ go up and down *doing a good* to man, and *always*
those things that were pleasing to *b* God ? Beloved, I commend to you
 these *four* memorials, to be as so many *scarlet* *c* threads upon every fin-
 ger of the right hand one ; that you may never put forth your hand to
 action, but these *memorials* may be in your eye. 1. Mind *d* duty, 2. What's
 anothers duty in your case, is *e* yours, 3. What you can't *say*, the Blessing
 of the Lord be upon it, *do not meddle* *f* with it. But *above* all, as soon
 forget your Christian name (*the name of a Christian*) as forget to eye
 Christ *g*, and what ever entertainment you meet with from the profane
 world *h*, remember your Exemplar *i*, and follow his steps : who did no sin,
 neither was guile found in his mouth, who when he was reviled, reviled not
 again ; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that
 judgeth righteously.

What

What must, and can, Persons do towards their own Conversion.

Ezek. 18. 32.

Wherefore turn your selves, and live ye.

THe words are part of that serious Exhortation begun in the 30. ver. *Repent and turn your selves from all your transgressions;* continued in the 31. ver. *Cast away all your transgressions, and make you a new heart and a new spirit;* and concluded in this verse, *Wherefore turn your selves, &c.*

In the former part of the verse, the Lord saith, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, I had rather men should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved, than dye in their sins and perish through their impenitency, *Wherefore, or therefore, turn your selves, &c.*

The Exhortation in these words, is back'd with a reason of great, yea the greatest strength, *viz. Life, turn and live,* that is, Ye shall live comfortably here, and happily for ever hereafter.

There be four Propositions deducible from these words:

1. *That man is turned from God.*
2. *That it's mans duty to turn unto God again.*
3. *That the Lords willingness that men should rather live than dye, should be a strong Argument to move them to turn.*
4. *That those who do turn shall live.*

F

I shall

In Philol. 1.3.
p. 290.

Ier. 31. 18.

I shall wave all those great Truths, and come to that which the words seem to import, viz. A power in man to turn himself. It is a good rule which *Glossius* in his *Philologic* gives us, That active Verbs are given to those things which do not properly and by immediate influx, do that which they signify, *Sed certa tantum ratione concurrunt*. God said to *Moses*, Lift up thy rod, stretch out thy hand over the Sea and divide it, *Exod. 14. 16*. *Moses* had not power to divide the Sea; but, because there was a certain concurrence of *Moses* using the Rod according to divine direction, therefore it is attributed unto *Moses*, whereas it was the work of God alone, for *ver. 21* its said, *The Lord caused the Sea to go back*: So in the work of Conversion, because man doth something about it, therefore he is said to turn himself, although the action be peculiar to the Lord, *Ephraim* saith, *Turn thou me and I shall be turned*.

The Query here is, *What can, or ought persons to do towards their own Conversion?*

Something first is to be spoken of mans power, or can; and then something of what man ought to do.

For the first of these: There is a threefold power considerable, an Active, a Passive, and an Obediential power.

1. An Active power, as in fire there is such a power to warm; in a good Tree there is such a power to bring forth good fruit. This kind of power is denied to be in man, *Mat. 12. 34*. *How can you that are evil speak good things?* If they cannot speak good things; much less can they do good things.

2. A Passive power, as in Wax to receive the impression of the Seal, and in Wood to receive the engravings of the Carver. This power is not found in man: *Paul* saith expressly, The natural man, or *fleshy man* *ἐσθλὸς ἄνθρωπος*, receives not the things of the Spirit of God, and *ἀδύνατος*, neither can he. A stiff dead hand receives nothing, neither can it.

3. An Obediential power, which consists in a capability to receive what form or impression soever the mighty God by his power shall put upon a Creature, such a power is in a stony heart to become flesh, its capable to be made fleshly when God puts forth his power. This is the power granted by Divines to be in men, and it is a very low power.

The Sacred Writ is plentiful in setting out the impotency of man, it tells us that,

He is not subject to the Law of God, neither can be, Rom. 8. 7.

That

That he cannot please God, *Rom. 8. 8.*

That he cannot come to Christ, *Job. 6. 44.*

That he can do nothing without Christ, *Job. 15. 5.*

That he cannot believe, *Job. 12. 39. Chap. 5. 44.*

That he cannot love God, *1 Job. 4. 20.*

That he cannot do good, yeild good fruit, *Jerem. 13. 23. Matth.*

7. 17.

That he cannot think a good thought, *2 Cor. 3. 5.*

Mans liberty or power is referrible to Natural, Moral, or Spiritual things: To the first, he hath great strength: To the second, some: To the third, none. A man freely doth natural and moral things, he can live soberly, and chastly, *quoad externos actus*, as to outward acts, he may abstain from gross sins, Theft, Murder, Drunkenness, &c. he may come to the Congregations freely, hear the Word, and not stop his ears as the deaf Adder doth, but as to spiritual acts, *quoad tales*, he is impotent.

For the better understanding of the Query, *What persons can do towards their own Conversion*, I shall lay down several Theſes or Conclusions, which I shall make good by Scripture as I proceed.

1. Conclus.

1. All dispositions and inclinations to spiritual good which man had at first in his Creation are lost and ruin'd by the Fall, *Rom. 8. 7.* The carnal mind is enmity against God: its so far from having inclination to God, or the things of God, that its not only an enemy, but enmity against God. And *Jer. 2. 21.* the Lord saith, *I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?* They had lost their original sap and were degenerated into a wild Vine, and could not bring forth good Clusters.

2. Conclus.

2. Man being altogether averſe from good, the servant of sin and death, told under sin, Satans captive, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength and power to convert or prepare himself thereunto, *Rom. 3. 10. 12. Rom. 8. 2. Rom. 7. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 26. Col. 2. 13. Rom. 5. 6. Job 6. 44, 45.* there must be the Fathers giving, and drawing, his gift and power, otherwise there is no coming to Christ. Men are, without Christ, in their natural conditions, *Eph. 2. 12.* they are dead to his life and righteousness.

3. Conclus.

The Lord calls for human endeavours, and would have men do more than

*negotium
causa, this
signifies, nego-
tium in aliqua
re ad lucrum.
Budans.*

than they do, Luk 19. 13. To those which had the Talents, he saith, *Occupy till I come*, be pragmatical, bestir your selves and improve your talents, so that at my return I may find you gainers: and he that hid his Talent in a Napkin, is branded for a wicked servant, *ver. 22.* and for a wicked and sloathful servant, *Mat. 25. 26.*

4. Conclus.

Men may do more than they do. *Isa. 64. 7. There is none that stir-
reth up himself to take hold on thee:* they did not shake off lukewarmness and laziness, and rouse up themselves to take hold of God by faith and prayer. It's the complaint of Christ that he was hungry, and they gave him no meat, thirsty, &c. they might have done those things, and bestowed their estates upon Christs members, as well as others. Its evident men may do more than they do, for that they do not that in their healths, which they do in time of their affliction; then they will early seek God, *Hos. 5. 15.* Weak ones do more than stronger, many of weak parts act beyond those of larger abilities. Many complain in their sickness that they have lost time, and not done what they might: where is the man that dare plead it before the Lord, that he hath done all he could? Because men do not what they might, the Lord may not only deny grace unto them, doing something, yea, doing much, but justly condemn them, because they did not what was in their power. It is a common saying among Papists, Jesuites, Arminians and others, *facienti quod in se est, gratiam non denegat Deus.* This is no sound foundation, for it supposeth some men do act to the uttermost of their power. But [Whoever yet did all that was in his power?] Whoever went so far, as that he might not have gone one step farther? Did ever any read, hear, or pray so much, but he might have read, heard, and pray'd more? *Jeboam* might have waited on the Lord longer, *2 King. 6. ult.*

*Nos negamus
illos unquam
fuisse bene u-
rentes bono
maturo propter
Deum, itaque
nos dubitamus
esse aliquod
meritum Con-
grui. Chami-
er. panstrat.
Cath. T. 3. l.
14. c. 4.*

5. Conclus.

Human endeavours are not required to co-operate with Gods grace, and so make it effectual, but his grace, makes their endeavours effectual when he pleaseth; Physical means make not Gods power effectual, but his power makes them effectual, and so its in mens endeavours. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, *Rom. 9. 16.*

6. Conclus.

All that men do before Conversion is not in vain, fruitless and to no purpose. When *Rehoboam* and the Princes humbled themselves at the preaching of *Shemaiah*, they were reprieved and delivered from destructi-

destruction, 2 Chron. 12, 12. *Ababs* humiliation did adjourn the judgment, 1 King. 21. 27, 29. The *Ninevites* found favour with God upon their fasting and repentance, Jon. 3. 8, 9, 10.

7. Concluf.

All the actings and endeavours of men whatsoever they be, are not formaliter dispositions and preparations to conversion, so that conversion must necessarily follow upon them: For there is no necessary connexion between the actings of men, and divine Grace. The Lord hath no where said, if you act so far, or be so disposed, qualified, or prepared, *I will convert you*. If Gods grace did depend upon mens actings, then those that are most Civil and Moral must be taken, and those who are profane and rebellious must be left; but Pharisees were excluded, when Publicans and Harlots were admitted. Great sinners sometimes are brought in, who did nothing towards their conversion, when those that did much are shut out. *Mary Magdalen* a great and infamous sinner is taken, when the foolish Virgins were refused; they were Virgins free from the spots and pollutions of the world, they had Lamps, Professions, they did much, they went out to meet the Bride-groom, they gat oyl into their lamps, they went to the door, and they cryed, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, and there was no opening to them. What preparations had *Paul* to this work of conversion? he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an injurious person, these were his dispositions and preparatory works he had towards his conversion, 1 Tim. 1. 13.

*Hac sunt opera
quibus se ef-
fere Paulus
Jun. in lo-
cum.*

8. Concluf.

Those that live under the means of grace, the administrations of Law and Gospel, have some operations and gifts of the Spirit (which some call common preventing and exciting Grace) whereby they are enabled to do many things towards, and in order to conversion. The Scribe that was teachable, and answered Christ discreetly, was not far from the Kingdom of God, Mar. 12. 32, 34. He was nearer unto it, than those had not the means. The preaching of the Gospel is to make the converted meet for Glory, and the unconverted meet for Grace, to prepare and bring them to regeneration. *I have begotten you through the preaching of the Gospel*, saith *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 4. 15. The preaching of it wrought much in them, before conversion it self was wrought. *Balaam* living under the Law, and amongst or nigh the people of God, was much enlightened, and greatly convinced, insomuch that he desired to dye the death of the righte-
ous.

9. Concluf.

9. *Conclus.*

No actings of men, or qualifications in men, are causes of conversion, do merit it, or make them congruous for it. They are not antecedent causes, or so much as *Causa sine quibus non*; but the Lord doth, according to his Prerogative, work sometimes where they are not, as *Ezek. 16. When thou wast in thy blood, I said unto thee, live.* There was no cause, condition, or qualification in them to beget affection, or move the Lord to do ought for them. It was the time of his love, and he said, *live.*

10. *Conclus.*

Whatever the endeavours and dispositions of men be, they are only by way of order before Conversion, they are only antecedaneous thereunto on mans part, not necessary on Gods part, who can, and oft doth work where there be no such previous acts or dispositions, as in the dry bones in *Ezekiel* they had no disposition or power in them to rattle and come together, neither had the dead womb of *Sarah* any power or vertue in it to conceive.

11. *Conclus.*

*Qui nobis ipsi
nihil a Deo
meriti sumus,
quibus Deus
nullam grati-
am, nullam
mercedem debet
scil. si iure no-
biscum agat
iuxta conditi-
onem servito-
rum. Brugen-
sis in loc.*

Acts of men towards Conversion, are not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, as making the person acceptable to God, or as inducements of God towards conversion; but we must acknowledg ourselves unprofitable servants, when we have done all that is commanded us, *Luk. 17. 10.*

12. *Conclus.*

*Nisi donum Dei
esset, ipsa ad
Deum nostra
conversio non
ei diceretur,
Deum virtutum
converte nos,
Aug. de gra.
& lib. Arb.
Jam. 1. 17.
August.*

Mans quickning, believing, repenting, or turning, are not acts of man in part, and partly of God, but they are wholly of God, and from God. *You hath he quickned, Ephes. 2. 1.* they were dead, and could not quicken themselves, it was He, the Lord: So, *No man can come to me except the Father draw him, Job. 6. 44.* This drawing or causing the soul to believe in Christ is wholly the Fathers work. And *Ephraim* saith, *Turn thou me and I shall be turned, Jer. 31. 18.* he could not turn himself; if the Lord had not done it, it would never have been done. *Paul* saith, *It's not in him that wills, &c. but in God, &c.* The will and deed are of Him, not of man, *Phil. 2. 13.* It is the Lord who is *causa totius entis.* Every good and perfect gift comes down from above, it's not a perfect gift if man contribute to it. The saying of the Father is sound: *Velle habemus, sed bene velle & in parte, & in toto, est à gratia.*

13. *Conclus.*

Man in the first act of Conversion is meely passive. *Those who be-
lieve*

live are born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; nothing of mans will comes in. Not ultimum diſſamen intellectus did ſet the will on work here, but the Lord begat them of his own will, Jam. 1 18. So that mans will is not *ſemiviva & ſemimortua*, but *penitus exincta ad bonum ſpirituale*, and ſo *ad hoc* to this of Conversion, as the vital faculty is gone in a dead man.

14. *Concluſ.*

Mans will being firſt converted to God, and by God himſelf, converts it ſelf alſo unto God, *acta agit*, as a child's hand in writing, being acted by the Maſters hand, it writes. Hence man may be ſaid to turn himſelf, for the will being healed and made good, of unwilling willing, it hath an intrinſecal principle of willing good, and ſo dominion over its own acts, whereby it turneth it ſelf to God. Where there is the Fathers drawing firſt, there is preſently the Souls coming.

Theſe *Concluſions* being laid down, I ſhall ſhew you what men can do towards their conversion: but firſt I muſt inform you that conversion may be taken two ways.

1. Strictly for the infuſion of grace into the heart and will of man, whereby he is regenerate, and his will made good, here man and his will being merely paſſive (for in this act *voluntas nec eſt libera nec voluntaria*) he can do nothing towards his own conversion in this ſenſe.

2. It may be taken *pro tota ſerie auxiliorum quibus ad eam movemur*. For all helps and means which further us that way; and in this ſenſe it's affirmed,

That men may do much towards their conversion, they may materially diſpoſe themſelves thereunto.

1. They may do much as Heathens have done, or would have done, had they lived under the ſame means, and had ſuch motives, as they have. The Lord tells Ezekiel that if he had ſent him to a people of a ſtrange Language; that was to the Gentiles, they would have bearkned unto him, Ezek. 3. 6. they would have received him and obeyed his Doctrine. It is certified from the mouth of Chriſt, That if the mighty works done in Chorazin and Bethſaida, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented, Matth. 11. 21. And that the men of Nineveh ſhould riſe in judgment with the then preſent generation, and condemn it, becauſe they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas was there, Matih. 12. 41. If one Sermon of Jonas who was one of the leſſer Prophets prevailed ſo much with Heathens, why ſhould not many Sermons of Chriſt, who is the chief of all the Prophets, prevail?

vail as much, if not more with Christians? *Væ torpori nostro*, what will become of us? *Rahab* shewed kindness to the people of God, and that was antecedaneous to her conversion. *Herod* heard the Word gladly, *Mar. 6. 20.* And *Pharaoh* desired the prayers of *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Exod. 8. 28.*

2. They may sit under a powerful Ministry, coming with reverence before God, not offering the sacrifice of fools, but hear the Truth without being contentious against it, as they were *Rom. 2. 8.* They may let the Truth have a full stroak at them and their corruptions, *They may receive the love of the truth, 2 Thes. 2. 10. and not hold it in unrighteousness, Rom. 1. 18.* So that they will not suffer it to have influence into their affections, and to break out into action.

3. They may hearken to the voice of Gods judgments and rods, when they are abroad upon themselves and others. No man should despise the chastisement of the Lord, but every one should hear the voice of the Rod, and who hath appointed it. The Prophet *Isaiah* tells us, *That the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness, when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth.* His judgments are the best Schoolmasters, and teach many good lessons. *Waldus* was taught by the hand of God upon one of his lociates, to become a new man. When *Manasses* was in affliction, he besought the Lord, and humbled himself greatly, *2 Chron. 33. 12.* *Vexatio dat intellectum*, when the Lord doth box and buffet us with his judgments, our understandings are opened and fear falls upon us: and though this fear be servile at first, yet it may end in filial, the spirit of bondage may become the spirit of Adoption.

*Ego non sum
ego.*

1 Pet. 4. 4.

*Præcepta doc-
cent & ducunt
exempla tra-
hant.*

4. They may observe the difference is made in mens lives after conversion from that which was before. Conversion is a strange work, it makes a man another man. They in *Peter* thought it a strange thing that men left their old courses. In conversion Wolves are made Lambs, and persecutors Preachers. How was it, that when *Paul* preached, all that heard him were amazed, and said, *Is not this he which destroyed them who called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent that he might bring them bound unto the Chief Priests?* True, it was he unconverted did so, not he converted; now he was another, a new man, now he was a Christian, and had other principles and practises than before, there was a great change wrought in him, and so in *Mary Magdalen*. Observation of such examples have their use and energy: For Examples are strong traces to draw men from wicked practices, *Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews,* said

Paul

Paul to Peter, Gal. 2. 14. Peter's example was the compulsion. There is a kind of compulsion in examples, not violent, but alluring and attracting. The example of the believing wife may win the unbelieving husband, 1 Pet. 3. 1. A prudent gracious Wife gains much upon a graceless Husband, by her modesty and obedience.

5. They may see what equity there is, that they should serve the Lord, being his creatures, and servants, and not only serve him, but so serve him as they have served their sinful lusts, and something more, seeing they depend on him. I speak after the manner of men, saith Paul, Rom. 7. 5. 6. 19. It's rational, just and equal, that as you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, &c. so now yield them servants to righteousness, unto holiness; it's reason, justice, and equity that you should do so. Should not men take as much pains for Heaven, as for Hell, for their Souls as for their Bodies, for the Lord Christ as for Creatures? Should they not be as diligent to weaken their lusts as they have been to strengthen them? Should they not be at as much cost to maintain the pure Worship of God, as the Inventions and Traditions of Men? It's a complaint of the Lords, Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? They might have spent their money, labour, time, and strength, and as much for true bread which would have fed their souls, as they did for that which was, as no bread, but rather husks for swine. Luke 15. 16.

6. They may remove and abate sin in part, which is done by the contrary. Knowledge removes ignorance as light doth darkness, grief abates pleasure, and fear boldness in sinning: Patience keeps under passion, and fasting tames unruly lusts. When the strength of a Feaver is abated by physical means, a man is disposed towards health: and when a man hath gotten Moralities (which he may do) and by them made an abatement of his sins and lusts, he is materially disposed to grace; as the ground when plowed is for seed, though the seed be not yet sown.

7. They may do materially what Converts do. There is no act considered in its meer nature and kind, which a true Christian may perform; but one unconverted may perform also, and may have like dispositions unto those they have. They may love God, It's clear, they loved God, who loved pleasures more than God. They may have Faith: Simon Magus believed: they may hate sin in others, if not in themselves. Absalom hated Amnon's uncleanness, they may delight in God, and in his ways, Isa. 58. 2. They may have a zeal for God; and such a zeal as may prevail more with them than temporal things. The Jews were so zealous

Rom. 10. 2.

of the Law, and for the Traditions of the Elders, that they would have ventered their lives for them: so Paul before his conversion, how zealous was he? *Acts 21. 3, 4. Gal. 1. 14.*

To come more particularly and closely to the question. Though Conversion be wrought in an instant, yet men have some pravius dispositions thereunto, who live under the sound of the Gospel, and obtain such knowledge as worketh in them several things, which I shall shew unto you from *Acts 2. 37, & 38. ver.* And when they heard this they were pricked in their hearts, and said, men, bre. Many preparative dispositions or qualifications they had unto repentance or conversion, but they had not yet repented: for Peter saith, notwithstanding these, *repent.*

1. Men may be convinced of sin as these were, they found they had transgressed the Law of God, and were guilty before him, for they were pricked in their hearts. Men may have strong convictions of sin, and not converted from sin.

*Acutus animi
dorem signi-
ficat. Piscat.*

2. They may mourn for sin, and grieve that they have done such and such things. These men had crucified the Lord Christ, put an innocent person to death, saw themselves in an ill condition, and thereupon mourned and grieved sorely, as the word pricked intimates; they had such grief as pained and afflicted their hearts. There's a How set upon Abab's humiliation by the Lord himself: *See thou how Abab humbled himself,* 1 King. 21. 29.

3. They may be fill'd with fear, and dread the threatnings and punishments of God due to sin. This was the case here; they had provoked the Lord against their souls; felt their consciences condemning of them, apprehended the judgments of God near unto them, and so were possess'd with much fear lest the Lord should destroy them, and therefore say, *Men and brethren what shall we do?* We know not whither to go, where to hide our selves, or what to do, that we may escape the things we have deserved, and fear.

2 Pet. 2. 22.

4. They may confess their sin, renounce it, and reform much; these Auditors of Peter being pricked in their hearts, said, *What shall we do? We have sinned; and that greatly; we confess and acknowledge it before God and you, it was a cursed act of ours, and we abhor it; we will never do so hereafter.* They were sick of sin, and vomited it up, as they in Peter, and would change their minds and manners, and walk in any way the Apostles should direct them: *The Merchants; Mat. 13. 46. sold all that he had for the pearl before he bought it.* This telling all is made by some Interpreters to be his restraint from all inward sin; and his conformity to all outward duties. This was much, and yet not more than unconverted

converted persons may attain unto. Herod reformed many things, the foolish Virgins went far, as was said before, they were Virgins free from spot and pollution, they had Lamps, visible professions, they went forth to meet the Bridegroom; they had some faith in him, and affection to him; else they would not have gone forth.

5. They may justify the Law and the Lord: should he condemn them, deal severely with them; what shall we do say these persons? we are guilty, we have broken the Law, which is holy, righteous, and good, and so is God likewise, who is the Author thereof; if therefore we be condemned, and must bear the curse and punishment of the law, we must both justify the Lord and it. Men may accept the punishment of their iniquity, and justify the inflictors thereof, man hath no cause to complain of the punishment of his sins. It's brought in by way of obijuration; *Wherefore doth a living man complain for the punishment of his sins?* Lam. 3. 39. He may complain of his sins; not of his punishment. Many Malefactors after sentence passed on them, do justify both Judge and Law.

6. Men may seriously consider the nature of their sin, what circumstances it is clothed with, what aggravations it admits, what crimson and skarlet is in it; what light, love, mercies, means, ingagements it is against. What shall we do say these troubled souls? We have sinned against the light of nature, the Law of Moses, our own consciences, the love of God and Christ towards sinners; in that we have crucified Christ, a man approved of God, whom we knew had done many miracles, wonders and signs, Acts 2. 22. and deserved not death, oh what shall we do, our sins are so dreadful?

It's in mens power to lay to heart what wrong an infinite blessed holy God hath by their sins, what mercies they keep from them, how greatly they defile them, what miseries and mischiefs they bring upon them, what a weight of wrath hangs over their heads for them. They may consider what checks of conscience they have sisted, what motions of the Spirit they have withstood, what precious seasons of grace they have neglected and slighted, what pains they have taken to satisfy a lust, how dear it hath cost them, how careless they have been of their souls, what a separation their sins have made between God and them. They may mind and meditate on it, that mans life is short, the pleasures of sin but a for a season, that there is absolute necessity of turning to God: *Except you repent, you shall all perish.* That turning is acceptable to God; else he would not call for it, nor make such gracious promises to it; as are in holy Writ.

7. They may come to it, to see no help in themselves or in any creature whatsoever, *What shall we do?* say these wounded men, we cannot help our selves, we have no playsters that will stick, no medicines which will heal; we are wounded in our Consciences, and as our hands, so theirs are too short to help us; its not in humane power to bind up our breaches, *What shall we do?* men may see themselves helpless, that they are without strength, shut up under sin, guilt and unbelief, children of wrath, and in a lost condition, the Law cursing them and sentencing them to suffer.

8. They may arrive to a resolution of doing or suffering any thing to be saved: *What shall we do?* We are resolved if we may find mercy, and live, to do whatever shall be commanded, to suffer whatever shall be imposed. The pride of their spirits are broken, their hearts become teachable and tractable, and their resolutions high for any thing to be done or suffered, so was it with the Jaylor, *Acts* 16. 30. when men are in storms at Sea, or on their sick beds at home, they resolve if God will spare them, to do or suffer any thing for God and his ways, and their own Salvation.

9. They may conceive fair hopes of mercy. The Lord Christ being held out in the Gospel, and freely offered to sinners, this breeds hope in them, a general and preparatory hope: *What shall we do?* You told us that God had raised up that Jesus we crucified, and made him Lord and Christ; and that whosoever should call upon his name should be saved; therefore we hope there is mercy for us. Thus had they a hope kindled in them, and Peter in the two next verses strengthens their hope, saying, *Repent and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the promise is to you and to your children.*

Acts 2. 21.

10. They may thirst after, and pray for the mercy hoped for. Such a qualification was in these men, *What shall we do?* You men of God we are a thirst, and do intreat you to tell us where we may have water to quench our heat, mercy to pardon our sins, balm to cure our wounds. The Publican in *Luke* hath left us his short pithy and affectionate prayer, to imitate being in this case and state, Lord, saith he, be merciful to me a sinner. He was a sensible of his sin and of his want of righteousness, he had hope of mercy, and thereupon came to the Temple to pray; and pray'd earnestly for mercy, and Conversion is none of the least mercies of God, or least needful for a sinner.

11. Men being come thus far, they are to wait upon God for doing the work: when the pots were fill'd with water, the water was not made Wine, till Christ put forth his mighty power; neither were the men

men who lay at the pool of *Bethesda* cur'd, till the Angel came down and stirred the waters: so a man in this case is to wait untill the Spirit of the Lord come in, & *omnipotentii suavitare*, or *visitrici delectatione* overcome his will, and set it for the Lord, and spiritual things: when this is, the work is done, and done without violence to the will; for its an omnipotent presence prevails with the will, and its immediately made willing in the day of this power.

By these forementioned things men are in a proximity or nextness to Conversion; but not converted. It must be an higher power than our own, which lifts us up into an higher nature or state than we are in at present. Though men may do much upon moral perswasions: yet not so much as to make themselves Converts or spiritual, of Animal or Natural. Previous actions and preparative dispositions, may make a man a picture of a Convert, not a true or living Convert.

Having shewn what persons can, and may do towards their Conversion, it remains to declare what they ought to do.

The Word must or ought, the signification of *dei* in *Greek* imports two things.

1. Necessity, there must be Hêresies, 1 Cor. 11. 19. its no mans duty to broach or bring in Hêresies, but they must be; its necessary for the discovery of men approved.

2. Duty, God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and truth, its mens duty so to do, *Joh. 4. 24.* It was the Pharisees and Scribes duty to pay tythe of Mint, Annise, and Cummin, &c. therefore, saith Christ, *These things ought they to have done, &c. Mat. 23. 23.*

Now then what persons can do, they ought to do: First, there is a necessity of it, we must do what we can; else we are sloathful and unfaithful, and our damnation will be just, one thing is necessary, *viz.* to turn unto God, that our souls may be saved, here it will hold good, Turn or burn; if it be necessary to prevent burning in everlasting flames, its necessary to turn, and so to do the utmost we can towards the same.

Secondly, its our duty, Strive to enter in at the strait gate; saith Christ, he commands it and lays this injunction upon all, *συνεχόμενοι*, strain, be in an agony, as Christ was in the work of mans redemption, so let men be in the works of their Conversion, put forth themselves as they did in the Olympick Games, the Wrestlers and Runners exerted all their might to obtain; and so must men about the work of their Conversion. The Lord who hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner, saith, *Turn yourselves and live.* There is life in turning, and what should not men do to preserve or obtain life?

Thēe

The Lord hath two great ends in saying thus: *Turn your selves and live ye*, although he know man is not able to do it.

*Quicquid nobis
præcipitur à
Deo, ad illud
faciendum suf-
ficientem po-
tentiam habemus.*

*Dixit Pelagius,
quod homo so-
lius liberi arbi-
trii viribus po-
tèst perficere
dei mandata.
Bradwardi-
nus de causa
dei, l. 2. c. 4.*

*Ideo dat præ-
ceptum ut ex-
citet desiderium
& præstet aux-
ilium. Leo.*

1. That we may see how corrupt and impotent our nature is, and so break the strength of humane confidence thereby, and bring us to be sensible of, and thoroughly to bewail our condition. It is not so as some think and speak, viz. that whatever God commands, man hath power to do: What man ever kept the Law since the fall of Adam? And is not the Law given by way of command? If man could keep the Law, we might be justified and have life by it, Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 3. 21. but the Law can neither do the one nor the other, and why? Because man hath not power or strength to keep it.

2. To put us upon looking out for help from whence the command cometh. Hence it is that what the Lord commandeth us to do in one place, he promiseth to give in another, *Circumcise the foreskin of your heart*, Deut. 10. 16. and God saith, Deut. 30. 6. *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart*. In the former verse to the Text, they are commanded to make themselves new hearts and new spirits, which they could not do, therefore in Ezek. 36. 26. the Lord promiseth to give and put the same in them: *Repent and turn your selves*, Ezek. 14. 6. and chap. 36. 27. *I will put my Spirit into them, and cause them to walk in my ways*: the spirit God would put in, should turn them from their Idols, and own wayes, and cause them to walk in his ways. The Lord doth therefore command such things, that our desires and endeavours being quickened, he may reach forth help unto us.

Therefore let us apply our selves to all these means and ways by which the Lord worketh Conversion. Let us make use of all the ways forenamed, and especially hear the word preach'd, and pray, *Turn us, O Lord, and we shall be turned*. And see to it that we use the means in good earnest; we may do more (as hath been shewed) than we do. Its the counsel of him who was wiser than other men, that *whatever our hands do find to do, we should do it with our might*, Eccles. 9. 10. that is, with our whole might; God must have the heart, the whole heart, and the fervency of it, be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; laziness and lukewarmness will not promote the work, fervour and diligence may further it much, see Prov. 2. 3, 4, 5, 6. and remember what the Lord Christ hath said, *Ask and ye shall have, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you*.

Rom. 12. 11.

How



How may beloved Lusts be discovered and Mortified?

Mat. 5. 29, 30.

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell.

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell.

MY Text is a part of Christs Sermon on the Mount: I shall not hold you long in the Context or portal, but only pass through unto the words that I have read.

In the verse before, our Saviour tells us, that *Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart.* This was spoken in opposition to the Scribes and Pharisees, and may be urged against many carnal Protestants, that have but gross conceits concerning the Law of God; and in particular, that the outward act of uncleanness only is the breach of the seventh Commandment; *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* Now our Saviour corrects this mistake: That *whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with*

with her already in his heart; not will do it, but he hath done it already: there is a speedy passage from the eye to the heart: And because the eye and the hand are many times used, as principal incitements to this sin, our Saviour gives his Disciples and us this serious and holy advice in the words that I have read, *If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee, &c.*

The words contain a double Exhortation, together with a double Reason and enforcement.

1. A double Exhortation: *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee.*

2. A double Reason and Enforcement: *For it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell: and so again, ver. 30.*

In the handling of these words, I shall first speak to them by way of Explication, and then by way of Observation.

1. For the Explication of them, I would entreat you to take into your thoughts these particulars.

1. We must enquire into the meaning of these two expressions, the right eye, and the right hand: most Expositors by far carry it, that these words are to be expounded improperly and figuratively: and here I shall not acquaint you, how Popish Writers abound in their own sense, concerning these words: there are sweet truths, that kindly and freely, without straining may be deduced from this Scripture; *like the Bee, I would not tear the flower I light on.*

There are two interpretations given of this place, that I shall take notice of.

1. There are some that by right eye, and right hand understand our nearest, and dearest comforts which we have in this world, which must be parted with for Christs sake, yet not absolutely, but upon this consideration, if they offend; *If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee, if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee:* Now this is *bona expositio*, a good Exposition, as our Divines distinguish; but not *recta Expositio*, a right Exposition: agreeable to the Analogy of Faith, but not suitable to the scope, and design of our Saviour in this place. Therefore,

2. There are others, that by right eye, and right hand understand beloved lusts, as hard to be parted with, as right hands, or right eyes: our Saviour mentions the right eye, and the right hand, because they are most prized, as having more than ordinary of spirits and natural hear,
and

and so more fit for action; I am sure this may be said concerning the *right hand*.

Indeed I conceive it an hard matter to prove, that by *divine appointment* one hand should be more useful than the other: but as God hath given us two eyes, and two ears, so two hands, so two *indifferently*, and that if need required the one might supply the loss of the other: if any, methinks the *left hand* should be preferred, because it is nearest the *heart*, the fountain of life and activity: but Christ takes them, as he finds them, as he doth in many other cases, and as we have ordered the matter, the *right hand* is more active and strong than the other, and so more precious: but to our purpose.

Some, I say, by the *right eye*, and the *right hand*, understand our beloved lusts; it is the usage of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, in a *figurative way* to express corruption by the parts and members of our bodies: so St. Paul, Rom. 7. 23. *I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members?* and the same Apostle, Col. 3. 5. *Mortify therefore your members, which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, &c.* As the members of the natural body need castigation, 1 Cor. 9. 27. *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, so the members of the sinful body need mortification:* and here in the Text, sin is expressed by the *right eye* and the *right hand*. Rom. 7. 23. Col. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 9. 27.

2. *If thy right eye offend thee, in the Greek it is scandalize thee, hinder thee in a way of duty:* for you must note, that obedience and holiness is often in Scripture represented unto us, by a *way*; to give you one place for all, Psal. 119. 1. *Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord:* and men are said to be offended, when something causes them to stumble, or fall in this way. Sin is as it were a block or stone, at which men stumble and fall: *let him which thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.* Psal. 119. 1.

3. *Pluck it out, and cast it from thee; cut it off and cast it from thee,* a Metaphor taken from Chirurgions, whose manner it is, when the whole body is endangered by any part, to cut it off *ne pars sincera trahatur*: but before I leave these expressions, take notice of the *Emphasis* that is in them, in these particulars.

1. 'Tis not said, suffer thy *right eye* to be plucked out, or thy *right hand* to be cut off: but thou thy self, *pluck it out, and cast it from thee, cut it off and cast it from thee:* to note two things.

1. That we our selves must engage in the mortifying of our lusts: *Sinners with their own hands, must pull out their own eyes.* 'Tis not enough

Rom. 8. 13.

to cry unto for God help, and in the mean time, to be careless and idle, as if nothing were to be done on our part: mortification is a work incumbent upon us, although we are impowred thereunto by the Spirit: If ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live, Rom. 8. 13. We must mortifie, although by the Spirit; the duty is ours, though the strength be Gods: so here, if thy right eye offend thee, thou thy self pluck it out, and cast it from thee.

2. That we must be a willing people in this, as in all other duties: a Christian dieth to sin, is not put to death.

2. 'Tis not said, if thine eye offend thee, observe it more than ordinarily, look narrowly to it, but pluck it out. To note, that nothing less is like to do our souls good, than the mortifying, the killing, the cutting off of our corruptions. Let a mans hand be cut off it is a dead member immediately. It is not so with plants when they are cut off from their roots, they will grow and sprout again: and so it is with the most inferior sort of sensitive creatures, for instance, cut worms into several pieces, every part will live, and stir, hence the Learned call them *insecta*. When the head of a fowl is separated from its body, it will live and flutter for some time: but this cannot be said of the most noble sort of creatures: this is a sure rule in nature, *Unitas & indivisibilitas est comes perfectionis, multitudo, & divisibilitas, imperfectionis*. Union is a sign of perfection, divisibility of imperfection: the more perfect any being is, the more united it is to its self, and the less any part of it can live *nisi in toto*, but in the whole: so that this phrase is a great elegancy, to note the killing of our beloved lusts, if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee, &c.

3. 'Tis not only said pluck it out, but cast it from thee, to note, that it is not enough for a man to leave his sin for the present, but he must renounce it for ever. We must not part with sin, as with a friend, with a purpose to see it again, and to have the same familiarity with it, as before, or possibly greater. *Amantium ira amoris reintegratio est*, the falling out of Lovers is the renewing of love. We must not only shake hands with it, but shake our hands of it, as Paul did shake the Viper off his hand, into the fire: pluck it out, and cast it from thee.

Thus much for the Explication of the words, for I shall have occasion onely to deal with the former part of these two Verses at this time.

2. I am to give you the Observations, I shall speak but a few words to some of them, that I may reserve myself, for that which I mainly intend.

1. Ob.

1. Observation.

That the eye, and the hand are excellent, and useful parts of the body of man.

You see here our Saviour Singles out these, from all other parts, as being very precious, if thy right eye offend thee, &c. if thy right hand offend thee, &c.

1. As for the eye, our Saviour tells us, that it is the light of the body: Mat. 6. 22. the light of the body is the eye: what is the world without the Sun, but a dark melancholly dungeon? what is a man without eyes? but monstrous and deformed, *monstrum horrendum informe, cui lumen ademptum*: the two eyes are two luminaries, that God hath set up in the Microcosm, mans little World: when God would express his tender love unto his people, he calls them the apple of his eye; he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye: and the like phrase St. Paul makes use of, when he speaks of the love of the Galatians unto himself, I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes, and have given them to me. I have read of the Emperour Adrian, that with an Arrow, by accident, put out one of his servants eyes; he commands him to be brought to him, and bids him ask what he would, that he might make him amends: the poor man was silent: he pressed him again: he told the Emperour, he would ask nothing, but he wished that he had the eye which he had lost, intimating that an Emperour was not able to make satisfaction for the loss of an eye. Zech. 2. 8; Gal. 4: 15;

Oh be very watchful over this excellent part! make a covenant with your eyes, Job. 31. 1. Shut your eyes from seeing evil, Isa. 33. 15. Set no wicked thing before your eyes, Psal. 101. 3. as the Apostle saith in another case, Doth not even nature teach you: God hath made a covering for the eye, that opens and shuts with a great deal of easiness, to teach us, that it is expedient sometimes that the eye be closed, and not holden open to every object.

2. As for the hand: it is the prime-part for action, Aristotle calls it *ἡγεμονικόν*, an instrument of instruments: without this, there could be no Cities, no Towns, no Merchandize, no Husbandry, no Manufacture; without this man would differ but a little from the beasts that perish; for what would his reason stand him instead, if he had not an hand to improve it? The Naturalists observe, that man could neither do nor say, without this useful and necessary part: for if a man did not eat with his hands, he must, as a brute feed with his mouth, and by that means the lips would become so thick, that he would not be able to

Speak with any distinctness, and indeed we find by experience, that they that have thick lips have an imperfection in their speech.

Jam. 4. 8. Oh improve this excellent part for God, a good life is expressed in Scripture, by a clean hand: *cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purifie your hearts ye double minded*: it is the greatest absurdity imaginable to plead a good heart, as many do, and yet have a foul and wicked hand: this is as if a man should say, here's a tree that bears ill fruit, but it hath an excellent root.

2. Observ.

That offences are from our selves: or the cause of stumbling and falling is from our selves: some lust or other; some right eye sin, or some right hand sin; if thy right eye offend thee, &c. Sin unmortified will very much endanger a mans falling: truly if you would not have your right eye, or your right hand offend you, you must offend them: *pluck it out and cast it from thee; cut it off and cast it from thee, if you would see clearly in Gods way, ye must pluck out your right eye, if you would walk evenly in Gods path, you must cut off your right foot.*

3. Observ.

That sin is properly and to all intents and purposes our own.

Col. 3. 5. If thy right eye offend, &c. if thy right hand offend, &c. the Apostle writing to the Colossians speaks thus, *Mortifie therefore your members, which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, &c. these sins, were their members: the whole body of sin is ours, and the members of that body are ours; there is a great difference between our natural body, and our sinful body: our natural body, is ours quoad usum, with reference to our use, but it is Gods quoad creationem, with reference to its creation. The body of man was originally and fundamentally created: now there is a twofold Creation.*

1. When a being is made of nothing, this is called by the Learned *creatio immediata*, an immediate creation.

2. When a being is made of something, but that something is *materia inhabilis*, matter altogether indisposed for the producing of that effect, and so is little, if any thing more than nothing, with reference unto that which is made: *materia est aliquid in se, nihil tamen respectu operis*: thus when God made the woman of a Rib, when Christ turned water into wine, when God made man of the dust of the earth, it was a creation, and this is called by the Learned, *creatio mediata*, a mediate creation, and our natural body still in a way of generation is Gods creature, but our sinful body is our creature: hence the Apostle, *mortifie your members which are on the earth*; and our Saviour in the Text, *If thy*

right

right eye offend thee, &c. so that sin is properly and so all intents and purposes our own.

4. Observ.

That although all sins are our own, yet there are some sins that in a more especial manner may be called ours; namely, our right eye sins, and our right hand sins, or if you will: Every man hath his proper, particular iniquity, his beloved sin.

If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee: If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: and the handling of this Doctrine will suit the Case, that is my task this morning, viz. How may beloved lusts be discovered and mortified?

In the prosecution of this Observation, I shall follow by Gods assistance this method.

1. I shall enquire why sin is expressed sometimes in Scripture, by the parts, and members of our body, as in this place by the right eye, and the right hand.

2. I shall shew you, that our right eye sins, and our right hand sins, our beloved lusts, may in a more special manner be called ours, or that every man hath his proper, his particular iniquity.

3. I shall enquire how this comes to pass, that particular persons have their proper and particular sins.

4. The Use and Application.

1. I am to enquire, why sin in Scripture is expressed by the parts and members of our body, and particularly here by the right eye, and the right hand?

1. You must note that the whole mass of corruption in Scripture, is called by the name of the old man, and the body of sin. *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. It is called the old man: in every young man, there is an old man, and it is called the body of sin: now if sin in the lump and bulk be a body, then particular sins may fitly be termed the parts and members of this body.* Rom. 6. 6.

2. Sin may be thus expressed; because as the natural body makes use of its several parts, for the managing and carrying on of those works that are natural, so corruption makes use of several lusts, for the effecting; and promoting of those works that are sinful.

3. According to their notion, that hold the soul by creation, as I conceive, sin is conveyed into the soul at first by means of the body. Certainly the soul of man is pure, and undefiled, as it comes out of the hand of God: I do humbly propose to men of learning, whether that

salut

rule *corporeum non agit in incorporeum*, or that a body cannot defile a spirit, is not further to be taken into consideration. We find by experience, that as the soul communicates its affections unto the body, the body hath life, and sense, and motion from the soul, that of it self is a lifeless lump of clay: So the body again hath a very great influence on the soul, and can, and doth communicate its distempers unto it. For instance, those that have *sanguine*-bodies are enclined to lust, those that are *choleric*, unto rashness and passion; those that are *melancholly*, unto suspicion, and tenaciousness; those that are *phlegmatick*, unto dulness and cowardize. So that sin may be in the body *dispositivè* before it be enlivened by the soul, though not *formaliter*; my meaning is, the body may have a disposition to defile the soul, before it is united unto the soul; and if so, no wonder if sin be expressed by the parts and members of our body.

4. Corruption looks at, and shews it self by the sinful actions of the body, and therefore may have its denomination by the parts of it.

Hence it is, that the Apostle, when he had concluded that the *Jew*, and the *Gentile* were both under sin; to make this manifest, he tells the *Romans* how sin discovered it self in the outward man: *Their throats is an open sepulchre, with their tongues have they used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips, &c.* We read in Scripture of the sins of the flesh, as well as of the spirit. Having therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthine's of the flesh and spirit: the sins of the spirit like so many plague-sores break out into the flesh. Wicked men are all over bespotted, and beleopar'd with sin: Lying is a spot in the tongue, pride is a spot in the eye, wrath a spot on the brow, bribery a spot in the hand, Idolatry a spot on the knee, yea, they are called spots and blemishes, 2 Pet. 2. 13. not spotted but spots: sin it self is a spot, and like fire, it turns the subject it hath to deal with, into its own nature. One part of the body in Scripture is called a world of iniquity. *The tongue is a fire; a world of iniquity: How much iniquity is there in the world, when in this little member there is a world of iniquity!*

Thus much shall suffice to have been spoken to the first thing propounded, viz. why sin is expressed sometimes in Scripture, by the parts and members of our body.

My second work is to shew you, that our *right-eye* sins, and our *right-hand*-sins, our beloved lusts may in a more especial manner, be called *ours*; or that everyman hath his proper, his particular iniquity: If

Rom. 3. 13,
&c.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Jam. 3. 6.

If thy right eye offend thee, &c. If thy right hand offend thee, &c. Look as it is with good men, though they have the seeds of every grace in them, yet some one may be said to be theirs in an eminent manner: *Abraham* was eminent for obedience; *Moses* for meekness, *Job* for patience: Thus it is with wicked men, though they have the seed of every sin in them; yet some one may be said to be theirs in an especial manner. Wicked men in Scripture are as it were marked out for several sins, *calculo nigro*: *Cain* for his Murder; *Simeon and Levi* for their treachery; *Corah* and his company for their conspiracy, *Nebuchadnezzar* for his pride; *Manasse* for his cruelty; *Balaam* for his covetousness: or look as it is in the natural body, though every man hath blood, flegme, choler, melancholy, yet some humour or other is predominant, from which a man hath its denomination; so 'tis in the sinful body, some sinful humour, or other hath the predominancy: most men have some *peccatum in deliciis*, some sweet morsel, that they roll under their tongue, which they will by no means spit out, or part with. It would be no hard matter to shew you, that several Nations have their proper and peculiar sins, as the *Spaniards* theirs, the *French* theirs, the *Dutch* theirs. Look into the Scripture and you will find, that the *Corinthians* had their sin, which is thought to be wantonness, and uncleanness; and therefore the *Apostle*, in the Epistles that he writes to them, uses so many pressing arguments against this sin. The *Cretians* are branded for Lyars; the *Jews* for Idolaters: So your Towns have their sins, Villages theirs, Cities theirs; possibly *London's* sin, may be loathing spiritual Manna, neglect and contempt of the Gospel, a non-improvement of Ordinances.

3. I am to enquire, how this comes to pass, that particular persons have their proper and particular sins.

1. Men have particular temperaments and constitutions of body, and therefore they have their particular sins suitable to their temperaments and constitutions: you heard before, how particular temperaments inclined men several ways. Creatures in the general are naturally delighted with those things, which are fitted, suited and accommodated to the genius, and frame of their respective natures. As in the same Plant, the Bee feedeth on the flower, the Bird on the seed, the Sheep on the blade, the Swine on the root; the same seeds are not proper for the sand, and for the clay. Every thing thrives most where it likes best: so 'tis in this case, that sin is like to thrive most in the soul, that we make most of, that we are most delighted in, that suits best our complexions and constitutions. We must be careful here, lest we strain this too far, with some Physicians
and

and Epicureans that hold the soul to be nothing else, but the temper of the body: but questionless this hath a very great influence on the better part. Hence some have adjudged it not fit, for illegitimate persons to be admitted into Ecclesiastical orders: and you know under the Law, by the appointment of God himself, a bastard was not to enter into the Congregation, to the tenth generation.

And I humbly conceive, that a toleration of unclean mixtures is not only against Religion, but against principles of Policy and Government: the children of filthy persons, for the most part proving degenerate, ignoble, lascivious, and by that means become the blemishes, the ulcers, the plague-sores of the body politique, Kingdom, and State whereunto they do belong.

2. There are distinct and peculiar periods of times, distinct and peculiar ages, that encline to peculiar sins; for instance, childhood inclines to levity and inconstancy, youth to wantonness and prodigality, manhood to pride and stateliness, old age to frowardness: you know diseases make men fretful, now *ipsa senectus morbus*, old age it self is a disease: If we take not heed, the sinful body will grow strong, when the natural body grows weak. I have heard of a good woman, something inclinable to passion, that used to say, I must strive against peevishness when I am young, or else what will become of me when I am old? And so Covetousness is a sin, that old age is very much addicted to. *Windelin* in his Moral Philosophy, cap. 25. discourses learnedly, *Cur senes sint magis avari quam juvenes?* when God is taking people out of the world, they cling fast about it, and cry *losh to depart*, truly this is no good sign. You know men that are sinking, and in a desperate case, lay hold on any thing.

3. Men have distinct and particular callings, that encline them to particular sins: For instance, a Souldiers employment puts him upon rapine and violence. And therefore John the Baptist, when the Souldiers demanded of him, *what shall we do?* tells them, *Do violence to no man*, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages. A Tradesmans employment puts him upon lying, deceiving, over-reaching his brother: Ministers, upon the account of pleasing the best, as we many times Catachrestically call them, or the greatest of the Parish, are tempted to flattery, to please men, to sow pillows under their peoples elbows. Magistrates and Judges are tempted to bribery and injustice, if great care be not taken, their very calling and office may prove a snare upon that account.

4. Men have distinct and particular ways of breeding and education, and upon that account have their particular sins. The child that hears his Father and Mother swear, is like to swear too. That child that hath frequently wine, and strong drink given to it by the Parents, when it is young, 'tis likely may get a smatch of it, and love to it, and so prove intemperate, when it is old. Joseph by living in the Court of Pharaoh, learned to swear the Court-Oath. Man is *ζῷον ἑμιμνησκον* a creature very much given to imitation. Examples have a very great influence on men, both in reference to virtues and vices, especially to the latter; we catch sickness one of another, but we do not catch health: For instance, the Scripture speaking of the son of Jeroboam, tells us, *That he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done, he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.* He writ after his Father's copy, and therefore the sins of his Father in a particular manner is taken notice of by the Spirit of God in that place. So 2 Sam. 6. 20. you have an account of Michal's jeering of David, because he danced before the Ark, and you will find that she is called there not the Wife of David, but the Daughter of Saul. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, how glorious was the King of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself! Now why is she called there the daughter of Saul? because she had learned this wickedness from her father: We have woful experience of this in our days. Formerly people could say, Psal. 44. 1. *We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what works thou didst in their days, in the times of old.* Truly the people of this generation may say, we heard our fathers swear, and curse, and scoffe, and mock at the ways of God; in reason we may expect mens manners to sure their education.

Thus much shall suffice to have been spoken to the third particular propounded to be discussed, that is to say, how it comes to pass, that particular persons have their proper and particular sins, and thus much also for the doctrinal part.

4. The fourth and last thing is the Use and Application of this to our selves.

Use 1.

For Lamentation and Humiliation in the presence of God this day: we trouble our selves about other mens sins, Magistrates sins, Ministers sins, as the Pharisee, Lord I thank thee, I am not as other men are, an Extortioner, an Adulterer, &c. or as this Publican.

And in the mean time, where is the man that considers his own iniquity, his *right-eye-sin*, or his *right-hand-sin* : there are great outcries amongst us, what have others done ? but who smites upon his thigh, and says, *What have I done ? We search every where, save where our Rachel sits upon her Idol.*

Possibly some poor soul may say, Did I know this particular sin, this *right-eye-sin*, or this *right-hand sin*, the Lord knows, I would quickly *pluck out* the one, and *cut off* the other, and that brings me to

Use 2.

Of Examination, how this sin may be discovered ; now to this purpose, take these marks, or rules.

1. It may be known by the *loves* and *tender respects* the sinner bears unto this *sin* : strong love for the most part, hath but one single object ; affections are like the Sun-beams in a burning glass, the more united they are in one point, the more fervent : A wicked man hath a particular affection for his particular lust. As *Abraham* cried, *O that Ishmael may live in thy sight !* So, a wicked man, oh that this sin may be spared ! This is his *Benjamin* : the soul is ready to say, here is one sin must be plucked out, and here is another sin must be cut off, and must this beloved Lust die also ? all these things are against me. The sinner seems to repent of sin, and to condemn sin, and himself for sin : but when the time of Execution comes, the man is very tender-hearted ; here's a reprieve for this sin, and there is a pardon for another sin ; oh it goes against him to cut the throat of his darling lust ! (*In a woful case when a man will undertake to pardon his own sin : this is crudelitas parcens, sparing cruelty ;*) and if it fall out, that his beloved sin die a natural death, that is, if the Adulterer, for instance, cannot actually engage in bodily uncleanness, as formerly, upon the account of old age, he follows it to the grave, as we do our dear friends, and heartily mourns that he and his dear lust must part.

2. It may be known thus ; that sin that *distracts* us most in *holy duties*, is our beloved sin : you may know that cold is natural to the water, and that it likes that *quality* best, because let it be made never so hot, it will be still working it self to its own proper temper. Souls possibly may sometimes be warmed at an Ordinance, but they quickly cool again, and are still working towards their proper lust, the sin they like best. You may take notice in Scripture, that God, to speak after the manner of men, in an especial manner, remembers the sins of wicked men in the performance of holy duties. *They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offering, and eat it,*

but the Lord accepteth them not. Now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins; as if a Felon or Murderer convict, should escape out of prison, and afterwards presume to come into the presence of the Judge: this brings his Felony or Murder into remembrance: and herein their punishment is visible sin. They remember their sins in their duties, and so will God. The people of God themselves are tainted with this. Pride was the Disciples master-sin; and whilst they were healing Diseases, and casting Devils out of other mens bodies, the proud Devil was stirring in their own souls: and our Saviour gives them a rebuke for that, *Luk. 10. 20.* In this rejoice not, that spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. *Luk. 10. 20.*

3. It may be known by its domination, its commanding power over all other sins: look as there is a kind of government in Hell, such an one as it is: Beelzebub is called the Prince of Devils; so in a wicked mans soul, one sin or other is still uppermost, and keeps the throne: all other sins do as it were bow the knee to this sin, hold up the train of this sin: are obedient servants to this sin, it sayes to one, go, and it goes; and to another come, and it comes: for instance, if covetousness be the beloved sin, lying, and deceiving, and injurious dealing will serve that: If Ambition, temporizing and sinful compliance will serve that: If Adultery, sinful wasting of time, and estate, and body will serve that. If Vain glory be the Pharisees great sin, devouring widows houses under pretence of long prayers, will serve that. As it is with a mans body, when it is hurt or maimed, all the ill humours will flow to the part that is ill affected. Hence it is, when a man is first wounded, he feels but a little pain, because he suffers only upon the single account of the division of the part: but afterwards the pain is increased, for then he suffers doubly, upon the account of the division of the part, as also by the conflux of ill humours. When the soul hath received some gash, some hurt more than ordinary by its particular sin, all the sinful humours will make haste to feed that iniquity: so that this is the sin that carries it and bears the sway in the soul. In a word: the sinner hath the curse of Cham as it were pronounced upon him; a servant of servants is he, his other sins are servants to his beloved sin, and he himself is a slave to them all.

4. That sin that Conscience in a particular manner, doth chide a man for, that 'tis likely may be his particular sin; the Greek word for Conscience is *syndesis*, it signifies a joint knowledge, or knowledge with another. It takes notice of things together with God. Conscience is

Gods deputy, Gods spy, Gods intelligenter, pardon the word, in our bosoms, an exact notary, of whatever we think or do, a co-witness with God, as St. Paul is bold to call it, *Rom. 9. 1.* Now wouldst thou know thy beloved sin? hearken to the voice of Conscience: doth that condemn thee for pride, for passion, for worldliness, for persecuting the ways of God? Oh remember, it is God Viceroy, honour it so far as to weigh, and consider thoroughly what it saith, 'tis likely, this may be thy particular sin, that which dishonours God most, if Conscience be anything tender will trouble thee most: many a man deals with his Conscience, as Felix did with Paul, hearken to it a while, whilst it tells them of their lesser faults, or that they are sinners in the general, but when it rebukes them for their darling lust, though they cannot say, *go thy way*, as Felix to Paul, yet hold thy peace, and when I have a convenient season I will give thee the hearing I

5. It may be known by being impatient of reproof. Herod hears John Baptist gladly, till he preached against his Herodias: this is a *noli me tangere*; touch me not. The Plant-animal, or the sensible Plant so called, when it is touched, shrinks up, and contracts it self; the sinner shrinks when he is touched in the sore place. The eye is a tender part, and apt to be offended if you meddle with it. This is the reason why people are enraged against a powerful, soul-searching, soul-saving Ministry: most men are for Mountebanks, and Quacksalvers, that make use altogether of Lenitives, and healing Plaisters, but as for your faithful Chirurgions that according to Art, will probe and search, and cleanse the Wound; they cannot away with them: I hate him, saith Ahab of Micaiah. He never prophesies good concerning me, but evil: onely I shall add this, that man, especially that Minister that reproves another for his sins, had need to be blameless as much as may be himself: thus the Apostle intimates, *Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self?* That man that is a teacher of others should teach himself, so much the more, we teach others when we deliver unto them Rules and Precepts, unto which they are to conform, we teach our selves, when we obey those Rules, *Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery, &c.* that man that hath a beam in his own eye, is not likely to pull out the mote that is in his brothers.

6. It may be known by this: it makes a man notoriously partial in his own case: David could allow himself another mans Wife, and could condemn one to death, for taking away another mans Lamb.

7. It may be known, by the covers, and cloaks, and fair pretences, that the sinner hath for this sin. Uncleanliness, and intemperance, are but tricks of youth, and sowing his wild Oats: Luxury is magnificence, covetousness is good husbandry, pride is a piece of nobleness, and grandure of spirit: yea, which is more, 'tis humility; you have some that disparage themselves in company, and they call this humility, when in truth, it is the height of their spirits; like the Archer, that draws back the arrow, that it may fly so much the higher, and so much the further. 'Tis strange blindness, or deceit, or both, to call not yellow, or some middle colour, but black white: yet thus it is with many, they shape their darling lust, like those virtues, unto which they are extremely contrary. Every wicked man is sins advocate, and will plead its cause *gratis*. Oh saith *Judas*, to what purpose is this waste, *This ointment might have been sold for much and given to the poor*: this he said, saith another Evangelist, *Not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein*. Beware of speaking any thing, towards the justification of your selves in any way of wickedness: you know the malefactor is condemned before he is put to death, and so it is in the case of sin, *cum peccator justificatur, peccatum condemnatur*, when a sinner is justified, his sin is condemned, and after condemnation followeth execution: *Job* vindicates himself in this particular: *If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by bidding mine iniquities in my bosom, &c.* then let thistles grow instead of wheat: as if he had said, I did not hide mine iniquity as Adam did, I did not cover my transgression, I was open and ingenuous: the Psalmist saith, *Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered*, but then it must be by Gods hand, not ours.

Mat. 26: 8, 9

Joh. 12. 6.

Job 31. 33, 40

Prov. 7. 21.

Jam. 1. 14.

8. If there be any one sin more than other, that the soul doth readily close with; that is its beloved sin: its right eye sin, or its right hand sin. *Sampson*, when all the world could not take away his strength, is easily perswaded by *Dalilah*. See how *Solomon* expresses the Harlots dealing with the young man: *with much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him*: the most she could do was to flatter him, and yet notwithstanding it is said, she forced him: sin works altogether by enticement; Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed; yet it is so powerful that it amounts to a force, as the request of a King amounts unto a command.

9. That sin which a man wishes were no sin, is like to be his beloved sin: the case of the young man in the Gospel is considerable to this purpose.

purpose, saith our Saviour, *If thou wilt be perfect, go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow me.* Ver. 22. *When the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful;* that is, he was very much troubled, that there was such a truth as this, that the world for Christs sake was to be parted with. So
 Psal. 14. 1. *The fool hath said in his heart there is no God:* Oh saith the fool, That there was no God, that there was no heaven, that there was no hell. *Atheism* was the beloved sin in that case: first men with there were no Deity, and then they judg so, and say so. Carnal affections after some time settle in opinion and judgment: 'tis possible for men by ways of unrighteousness, by a constant course of cheating and cozening, so far to shut up and imprison their natural light, and so to muffle their reason, and understanding; that at length they may cheat and baffle their own souls, and think it a piece of justice and righteousness so to do.

10. That sin which we think of first in the morning, and last in the evening, is like to be our beloved sin. God is the chiefest good, the prime object of our love: and therefore as he is *Alpha* and *Omega* in himself, so he is a *so* unto his people, the beginning and the end, the first and the last: they begin the day with him, *Psal. 139. 18. When I awake, I am still with thee:* they end the day with him, thus the Spouse, *Cant. 3. 1. By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth:* you have mention of both these, *Isa. 26. 9. With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me, will I seek thee early.* Now this sin that I am treating of, like that *Zouos*, that lawless person that we read of *2 Thes. 2. 8. that man of sin, ver. 3. opposeth and exalteth its self in the soul above all that is called God, and sitteth in the seat of God.* A beloved lust is usually the sinners first and last, he gives it entertainment first in the morning, and takes his leave of it last in the evening: yea, this darling sin must be entertained and made much on in the Bed-chamber: the Psalmist speaking of a wicked man, *Psal. 36. 4. tells us, he deviseth mischief on his bed: for the most part that is a very friend, that we admit to our bed sides.*

11. That sin which most infects us, and troubles us in our solitudes, and retirements, that is our beloved sin, my meaning is when a man is alone, in his Closet, or in the Fields, and his thoughts run adrift: that sin which of themselves they move towards, and close with, that may be his beloved sin; the current of the soul is that way. O Christian, mark the workings of thy heart in private, and thou mayst possibly make some discoveries. When a man retires himself into some solitary place

place, it is usually absurd to trouble him: 'tis a friend indeed, that falls in with him, and offers his company in that case, *That sin is more than ordinarily beloved by us, that interposes in our privacies.*

12. And lastly, that sin, that we are willing to endure greatest hardships and sufferings for, that is our beloved sin: for instance, suppose Covetousness be the darling sin, what base, absurd, unreasonable offices, will it put a man upon: how scraping, and niggardly and dunghill-like will that man live, in his Town, or in his Parish; and expose himself to scorn and contempt from every one that knows him. Suppose Ambition be the beloved sin, how will a man in that case, swear and forswear, and temporize, and like the Boat-men, look one way and row another; almost any thing for preferment. If Uncleaness be the mans particular sin, how will he destroy his body, disgrace his name, overthrow his estate, for the gratifying of his lust? I dare aver, that the worst and basest drudgery imaginable, to scoure Kettels and Dishes, to tug at the Oar, to dig at the Mine, are honourable employments, in comparison of this.

Use 3.

Is for Exhortation, and Direction, to press you to the mortification of your beloved sin, and shew you how it may be mortified: let me take up that Scripture again, *mortifie your members, which are upon the earth*, that is, let every sin be mortified; for you must know, as death is to the members of the natural body, so is mortification to the members of the sinful body. Now in death the soul is separated not only from one member, as it is in a paralysis, or numb Palsy, but from all, even from the principal parts of the body as well as others: so 'tis in spiritual death, there is a separation of the soul, not only from this or that sinful member, but from the whole body of sin, from the principal parts and members of this body, as well as others: the right eye is dead, the right hand is dead, it must needs be so, the one is plucked out, and the other is cut off. Col. 3. 5.

A Christian must deal by his darling lust, as the Israelites dealt by Adonibezek, they cut off his thumbs, and his great toes, so must thou deal with this sin, hack it, maim it, that it may not be able to go nor stand, nor act, nor stir, if it were possible: and for that purpose take these directions.

1. Labour to have your heart steeled, with an holy courage, and resolution against this sin, it is upon the account of baseness and cowardliness;

ness of spirit, that people fall by the right hand of their spiritual enemy: shall I give you some instances for this? doth the Devil tempt thee to uncleanness, is that thy right eye sin, or thy right hand sin? take up St. Pauls resolution, Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? *μη γινωσκο*. God forbid; Josephs resolution, How shall I do this wickedness, and sin against God? Doth the Devil tempt thee to blasphemy, or to perjury, or to lying, or to any other sin of that nature? take up the Psalmists resolution, I said I will take heed to my wayes, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked are before me. Art thou tempted to Idolatry, to deny the truths of Christ, to make shipwrack of faith, and a good Conscience? take up the three Childrens resolution, Be it known unto thee, oh King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image, which thou hast set up. Every man should be a Prince over his lusts, and like Jeshuabs Captains, should put his feet upon the necks of them: here courage, resolution, severity is very successful: and in special, exercise your revenge on your beloved lust: fight not against small, or great comparatively, but against this kingly, this master sin.

2. Let your repentance be particular for your particular iniquity: it is not enough to confess your sins, in the lump, in the general, but in prayer, you must take particular notice of your right eye sin, your right hand sin: thus David was particular in his repentance, Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight: this evil of murder, and this evil of Adultery, pointing as it were with the finger to particular sins. Zachew makes a particular confession, of that wrong and injustice, that he had been guilty of: Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man, by false accusation, I restore him fourfold: this particle if in that place, may not be a note of doubting, but suspicion, if I have taken, that is, seeing I have taken from men by false accusation? *si Deus est animus*, seeing God is a Spirit.

3. Beware of those things that may occasion the commission of this sin: for instance, if thou art prone to the sin of lying, keep a door before thy lips: if to gluttony and drunkenness, when thou goest to a feast, put a knife to thy throat. We use to say proverbially, *Occasion makes a thief*; this is true also in other cases, occasion makes a lyar: occasion makes a drunkard; it is a sign of a naughty heart to dally with occasions to sin: Look not thou upon the wine, saith Solomon, when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth it self aright: It is not simply unlawful to look upon wine in the glass, but if this may occasion intemperance

perance, here is a law laid upon our looks: that command which forbids a sin, forbids also those things that have a tendency thereunto, as is observed by learned Commentators on the Decalogue, sometimes this is expressed in Scripture: the Commandment that forbids *Adultery*, takes in all causes and occasions thereunto: thus Solomon speaking of an Harlot, Prov. 5. 8. *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house*: Harlots, like pestilential diseases, make the houses infectious where they are, and therefore *come not nigh the door of her house*: 1 Thes. 5. 22. *Avoid all appearance of evil*: I know there are some that dislike the translation of *ἀποφύγετε* by *appearance*, and rather think it should be expounded *sort* or *kind*; but whether the word be taken in a Logical notion, in the whole book of God is very questionable; and therefore why we should depart from the current and stream of Expositors, and the sense of our learned Translators, I know not. When God would forbid the sin of *injustice*, selling wares by false weights, mark how it is expressed, *Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small*. It was a sin not only to sell wares by one sort of weights, and take wares in by another: but to have *a great, and small weight in his bag*. God would not have us come near the sin of injustice. Hence also is that caution of St. John, *Little children keep your selves from Idols*; if you would avoid Idolatry, beware of Idols, *he that would not bear the Bell, must not meddle with the Rope*. Deut. 25. 13. 1 Joh. 5. 21.

4. Pray unto God, that thou mayst not fall into such a condition, as may draw forth that corruption, that thou art most prone to: this was that which undid Judas, he was naturally enclined to unjust gain, and he had the Office of carrying the bag; and thus his lust was drawn forth. When a man is apt to be high-minded, it is a snare to be in an high place: when a man is passionate, it is sad to converse always or mostly with those, that are kindle-coals: that by provocations and unworthy carriages, are casting fire-balls into a mans soul, and he having a gunpowder-nature, is in a flame presently. And the nearer the relations in this case the worse. It is sad when my next neighbours house is on fire, but 'tis worse when mine own is on fire: it is a promise made to the people of God, that all conditions of life, and all passages of providence shall work together for their good; and sotherere on the contrary, when our conditions and relations make for the worse, especially with reference unto our souls, it must needs be very sad.

5. Learn to suspect things that are delightful, Gen. 3. 6. *The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes*. Carnal pleasures are forbidden fruit: Agrippina poysoned her husband

in that meat he loved best : the Devil tempts us with dishes sweetly poysoned. Love and delight, *pari passu ambulans*, walk together, and keep the same pace : many a man hath been undone by riches and honours and worldly comforts, like the Bee that is drowned in its own honey. Christians be careful ; Every one of us hath Eves sweet tooth in our beads.

6. Labour to act that grace in especial manner, which is contrary to thy beloved sin : for instance, if passion be thy darling sin, labour to act the grace of meekness ; if excess, the grace of temperance ; if uncleanness, the grace of chastity : let me tell you, where grace is helped by nature, upon the account of a mans temper and constitution, there a little grace will go far : but when grace is to be employed against nature, it had need to be strong and active : your Watermen in some cases take their ease, and their Boats will go of themselves, but when wind and tide is against them, then they must labour at the Oar, *Hic labor, hoc opus*.

7. Keep a watch over thy heart, Prov. 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life* : so our Saviour, *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemy*. Godliness is but a fanfic till the heart be reformed : we read in the book of Psalms of Israels turning unto God ; *When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and enquired early after God, and they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer* : but was their conversion right ? no, Ver. 36. *They did flatter him with their mouth, and they lyed unto him with their tongue ; and whence was this ? Ver. 37. Their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant* : therefore, mortifie sin in its rise, in its first principle, lay the axe to the root, there is more sap in the root than in the branches ; there is more sin in the heart than in the life : one stroke at the root of the tree, conduces more to the deadning of it, than many at the body, or the boughs, or any other part whatsoever.

To quicken your industry in this, know, that the motions of original sin, as they are permanent, so they are exceeding violent, and impetuous. I remember the learned Davenant, *de justitia habituali & actuali*, cap. 5. gives this difference, between the remission of actual and original sin : when actual sins are forgiven, saith he, *penitus tolluntur, quoad maculam & reatum*, both as to their guilt and filth : but it is not so with original sin, the guilt is done away, but the stain remains ; this is a sin that dwells in us, that abides in us, and abides by us ; we shall not be rid of the body of death, till the death of the body. Sin is an ill tenant, it will not out till the house fall upon its head : now the certainty of the inherence of this sin, is an argument of the more efficaciousness of its operation,

modum

modus operandi, sequitur modum essendi: unquenchable fire burns more fervently, than that which may be extinguished; the reason why the *Angels* at this day do the will of God, in a more eminent way than the Saints on earth, is, because they have such a principle of holiness, as cannot be lost to Eternity, whereas the Saints on earth have a weaker principle of holiness, which may unhappily be abated, though it be recruited again: the reason why the soul of an healthful person, moves and acts with more vivacity, and energy, and power, than the soul of a sick man, is, because in the latter, it may be departing, and taking its leave of the body, or at least may be in danger so to do, whereas the former, being a man of an hail and good constitution of body, the soul may act, inform, enliven it many years.

8. Get a respect to all Gods commandments, Psal. 119. 6. *then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.* The reason why men indulge any one lust, is, because they pick and cull their duties, and so indeed serve not the will of God, but their own choice. Oh, how many are there, that answer the Lord with half obedience, like the *Echo*, which makes not a perfect response of the voice, but of some part thereof? Many make such a difference amongst the *Tables*, as if only one side, or one part were of Gods writing: Oh Sirs, this will not do, this will undo; the man that like *Agrippa*, doth but almost believe, almost repent, almost conform to the will of God, that man shall be saved proportionably, almost. One sin unrepented of will cause you to miscarry to all eternity: one crack in a bell may make it unserviceable, untunable, and till it be new cast, it is good for nothing: one wound may kill your bodies, and so may one sin your souls. Oh Christians, what has become of you and I? if Jesus Christ had satisfied the justice of God for all but one sin? There is a Text in *Ezekiel*, that is usually taken for a place of the greatest mercy in the whole book of God, *When the wicked turneth away from his wickedness, that he* Ezek. 18. 27: *both committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.* You have to the same purpose, ver. 21, 22. of the same Chapter, but pray mark what follows, ver. 28. *Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgression that he both committed, no mercy to be expected from this Scripture, unless a man turn away from all his transgressions:* 2 Tim. 2. 21. the Vessel of honour is distinguished from the Vessel of dishonour, by this character, that it is sanctified and prepared for every good work: and this is the commendation of *Zachary*, and *Elizabeth*, they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments, and ordinances of the Lord blameless. Halting in Religion is a trouble.

troublesome, deformed, dangerous gesture; and there is no cure for this, like cutting of the right foot.

9. Lay hold on Gods strength for the mortifying of thy beloved sin: surely this is no easie work, see how it is expressed in Scripture, sometime it is called the mortification of our members; is to mortifie a part of the body an easie work? sometimes the circumcising of the foreskin of our hearts, Deut. 10. 16. did the Sichemites count Circumcision an easie work? by crucifying of the affections and lusts, Gal. 5. 24. was crucifixion an easie death? And here in the Text, it is called a plucking out the right eye, and cutting off the right hand: the Apostle Paul in the forementioned place, tells the Romans, if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, you shall live. He who is the fountain of spiritual life, is also the principle of this spiritual death: this is a work to be done by us, but through the Spirit. Hence in Scripture God is said to do this: The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed: and the Apostle expresses this by circumcision made without hands: intimating that it is not a work of mans hands, but Gods.

Rom. 8. 13.

Deut. 10. 16.

Col. 2. 11.

Q. If any ask me, but how shall we lay hold on Gods strength?

R. By faith, great things are attributed unto this grace, because it lays hold on God, and sets God at work, 1 Joh. 5. 4. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith: it overcomes not only the honours, and riches, and pleasures of the world, but the lusts of the world, of which you have mention. 1 Joh. 2. 16. Faith is a self-emptying grace, a poor beggarly hand, rich only in receiving from another: something like Davids sling and stone against Goliath lusts; but in the name of the Lord of Hosts, and by his strength, even a babe in Christ through faith shall overcome the world: I must tell you that Hannibal, and Alexander, and all the glorious Victors that we read of, were but fresh-water Soldiers, in comparison of one that is born of God.

I shall only to what I have said, add a few Motives, to quicken you to your duty, and so commend all to Gods blessing.

Motive 1.

Right-eye sins, and right-hand sins are the greatest hinderances of the soules closing with Christ. When you slay any creature, the skin comes off with ease, till it comes to the head, and there it sticks, more than ordinary skill is required to get it thence. Now I must tell you the sin that I am disswading you against, is, not only the eye-sin, and the hand sin, but the head sin, and here conversion sticks. The sinner forbears many sins, and performs many duties: but when it comes to this, *Oh Master, faith flesh and blood, pity thy self,* beware what thou dost; what, be-
thing.

thine own Executioner? pluck out thy right eye? cut off thy right hand? A mans sin is himself, to deny ungodliness, is to deny thy self; this is a kind of *αυτοκτονία*, self-murder: No man ever yet hated his own flesh. Is there no getting to heaven, unless a man leave himself behind? This is *durum sermo*, an hard saying: As Naaman the Syrian, 2 Reg. 5. 18. When my master goeth into the house of Rimmon, to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow my self in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing: So the sinner, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing. The young man in the Gospel tells Christ. That he had kept all the commandments from his youth: but when Christ said to him; One thing thou lackest, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven, and come and take up thy cross and follow me: Here he sticks: ver. 22. he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions, or his great possessions had him: Alas, this poor young man little thought, that notwithstanding his forwardness to keep the Commandments, he was under the power of worldly lusts. Oh Sirs! there is great strength in a river, when it runs smoothly, and without noise.

Mark 10. 29.
21.

Motive 2.

As these sins are the greatest hinderances of the souls closing with Christ, so they prove the greatest trouble to the soul afterwards. Your Eye-sin will prove your Eye-sore, yea, and your Heart-sore: My meaning is, your conscience will suffer most upon the account of this sin all your days. Thus Job, cap. 13. 26. Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth. When a mans conscience is disquieted and tormented for the sins of his youth, then he may be said to possess them: yea, it may occasion not only grief, but guilt. Of all sins, this is many times most unmortified even after Mortification: Soldiers that have received wounds and bruises when young, have smarmed by them when they have been old. There are many good souls, that after cure have gone to heaven, halting on the old maim.

Motive 3.

The mortifying of our *darling* lust, our *right-eye* sin, and our *right-hand* sin is a choice evidence of regeneration: truth of grace hath as much as any way been declared thus. Paul after conversion, becomes a Preacher of that name, which he before blasphemed. Those of Ephesus that were given to witchcraft, and sorcery, after their conversion, brought Ast. 19. 19. their books together, and burned them before all men: and many other instances of the like nature are urged by Divines to this purpose. Crammer that had subscribed the Popish Articles with his right hand, afterwards

Rom. 7. 5.

as a piece of revenge, put that hand first into the flames. A true Convert, of all sins, will be revenged most upon that, by which he hath most dishonoured God. His right eye, and his right hand shall smart for it; the one must be plucked out, and the other must be cut off, as we say of hunger, he will kill that, which otherwise would have killed him; I speak much of mortification and death to you this morning: Christians be not afraid: to dye thus, doth not argue imperfection: there is *corruptio perfectiva*, a corruption that tends to perfection: I was alive, saith Paul, without the Law once: but when the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died. This is expiring unto life, just as an Embrio expires after it becomes a child.

Here I would add two Cautions under this head.

1. The forbearing of any outward act of sin whatsoever, is no evidence of Mortification, or Conversion: Sin may be restrained when it is not mortified: a chained Lion is a Lion still; a Swine washed, is a Swine still. In some sense you may be said to be a new man, and yet you may not be a new creature. This may come to pass partly from the sense of temporal inconveniences, partly from the clamours of natural conscience, or from fear of wrath. Such principles as these are not strong enough to kill sin, or to heal the Soul, but are like those odours which we use, to raise men out of a fit of the Falling sickness, but doth not at all cure them of the disease.

2. The mortifying of our darling sin is joyned with an universal hatred of all sin: A true Convert bates every false way, as the Psalmist phrases it, sin is often expressed in Scripture by abomination: it is so to God, it should be so to man; anger is only with reference to particulars, but hatred is *velut ad* *hunc* against the kind; a godly man hates sin as sin, and therefore he hates every sin; the Devil hates goodness, as goodness, and therefore he hates all goodness, *a quatenus, ad omne valet consequentia*, a man may be angry with sin, and not kill sin: but as he that bates his brother is a murderer, so he that bates sin is a mortifier. When the right eye is plucked out, and the right hand is cut off, the whole body of sin hath its death wound. The man that keeps himself from his iniquity, will keep himself from every iniquity: the heart with one hole reserved for sin is not sound.

Motive 4.

Mortification is a duty becoming the best of Saints whilst they are in this world. I told you in the beginning of this discourse, that the Text was part of Christs Sermon upon the Mount; and if you consult the first and second verses of this Chapter, you shall find that it was preached to Christs own Disciples, *Vir bonus & pius, non est qui carnem non habet, sed qui*

qui carnem suam mortificat : a good man is not one that hath no flesh, but he that hath crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. 5. 24.

Gal. 5. 24.

It is with our sinful body, as with our natural body : If you cut a Wen, or any Excrecence of that nature, it will grow again, and again, and it will be an hard matter to be rid of it all your days : So though every day we be paring away our lusts, yet they grow again.

To close all, Go on and persevere in the subduing and killing of thy beloved Lust : Mortification is a work once done, and yet in this life it is alwayes a doing : There are some things that consist of an iteration of multiplied acts ; as in Wedlock, persons are actually married at once, the Husband surrenders himself unto the Wife, and the Wife surrenders her self unto her Husband, and yet if they live together, suitably to that near relation; marriage is as it were renewed every day: there is a continual surrender of themselves each to other : So 'tis here, when the soul is first converted, the beloved sin is mortified, and yet there is a continual mortification of it : this is a duty that consists not in any one act, though never so good, never so vigorous : but 'tis a continued act of the whole life. 'Tis not killing sin at one blow ; the strength of sin decays by degrees, it begins in the weakning of sin, and ends in the destroying of sin, *Sin dies a lingering death*, therefore let us go on in this great and necessary work. You know Sampson deny'd, and deny'd Dalilah for some time, and would not discover where his strength lay : but not holding out, he lost his strength and his life to boot : beware of Apostacy. *Crabs that go backward are reckoned amongst unclean creatures*, Lev. 11. 10. *Fatum non dicitur, quod non perseverat* is a maxime, a Will not finished, is no Will : a Deed, unless it be signed, sealed, and delivered, is no Deed. The Sacrifice that was offered up unto God, was not to want so much as the sayl, Lev. 3. 6. True Christians hate sin so perfectly, that they cannot be quiet till it be utterly abolished. First, they go to God for Justification, *ne damnet* : then for Sanctification, *ne regnet* ; then for Glorification, *ne sit*. Let us be faithful as to this spiritual death, that we may receive a crown of life.

What



What Relapses are inconsistent with Grace.

Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost; And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come: If they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance seeing they crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

I Could say (Beloved) of the Interpretation and Application of this Scripture, before I begin to open it (containing the Doom and sad Sentence pronounced against Apostates and Relapsarians) as once Daniel did to the King, before he opened his mouth to give the sense of his Ominous Dream, *The Dream be to them that hate thee, and the Interpretation, to thine enemies; yet shall I not wish so much ill to our worst enemies; but the Text, be to them that hate God; and the Interpretation, only to the enemies and despisers, or despisers of his grace.*

Dan. 4. 19.

It is one of the most startling Scriptures in all the Bible, and one of the most Terrible flying fiery Koules in all the Book of God, utterly con-

consuming the house of the hypocrite-Apostate with the Timber thereof, and the stones thereof, and dreadfully affrighting his truly Religious neighbour who trembleth at Gods Word.

The Novatians or Cathari abused this place of old, to shut the Church-doors and gate of grace, upon such as had fallen after their profession of Christianity. And many poor souls and troubled consciences have as often quite perverted, or misunderstood it to the shutting up the gate of heaven, and door of hope against themselves, after their bitterly bewailed falls or slips: but both unjustly.

But as *Josephs* Interpretation once of the same nights dream, when rightly applyed, did rid the *Butler* out of his misapprehended fears, and only left the more *secure Baker* under that execution which the other apprehended, but himself never dreamt of; so neither this, nor any other Scripture speaks a word of terrour to any sin-troubled soul, that trembles at Gods threats. But all the Prophets Prophecie good with one consent to these, and my word shall be like one of theirs. Gen. 40.

It was indeed once a joyfull sight which *Jacob* beheld at *Bethel*, Gen 28. 12. A ladder whose foot stood on the earth and the top reached to heaven, and Angels ascending and descending upon it.

But here we see a Ladder whose top spires toward heaven, but the foot resteth in hell, where (seeming) Angels of light ascend, or such new strange Gods ascend as the Witch once saw out of the earth) but black Apostate Angels descend. *Intrat Angelus, Exit demon.*

I am to speak of the Case of *Relapsers*, and my Text is the fairest glass to discover so foul a sight that I know.

Here we have the rise and fall, the first and the last, the better and worse part of an Apostate-hypocrite described.

1. The former, his Rise, his first and Better part set out in five Particulars. 1 Sam. 28. 13.
 1. *Enlightning.* 2. *Tasting the heavenly gift,* as of some common faith, or repentance, or the like. 3. *Partaking of the Holy Ghost,* (which is not to be understood of the sanctifying graces of the Holy Ghost, but the common, or extraordinary gifts, as of Tongues, &c. of the sanctifying Spirit.) 4. *Tasting the good word of God.* 5. *And the powers of the life to come.* Had they had to these five steps two other more, sincerity at the bottom of the Ladder, and perseverance at the top, they had been safe.

2. The latter, his fall, his last and worse part, is set out in four Things.

1. His fall is a break-neck, fatal down-fall. They fall away.] It is not an ordinary slip, or stumble, but a down-right, not fair fall, but a foyl

L

given

He saith not ἀμαρτυρίαν, τὰς ἢ παρὰ-καίροτας, but παρὰ-καίροτας, ut cum edificium male factum prorsus corruit Parz. in loc.

given them by Satan, such a fall as his own was at first.

2. The *irrecoverableness* of that fall, they are *past grace*, and grace and mercy hath done with them; *They cannot be renewed to repentance*, as is said of *Esau*, there is no place for their repentance, though he sought for the blessing with tears, *Heb. 12. 17.*

3. The certainty of that *irrecoverableness*, in that it is said to be *impossible*, &c. he doth not say, it is *hard*, or *unlikely*, or *seldom* seen, but is absolutely impossible *αδύνατον* 38. it was never seen, or ever shall be. Impossible not so much *ex natura rei*, as some things are utterly impossible which imply a contradiction, as that *true* should be *false*, *good*, *evil*; *light*, *darkness*; these impossible because *inconsistent* with the *nature* of the things themselves. But impossible *ex instituto Dei*, because inconsistent with *Gods decree* and declared will, as impossible as we say, An elect, or true believer should perish, or an impenitent person be saved, so we mean impossible by reason of *Gods irreversible decree* concerning such.

4. The cause that makes all this *dead-sure*, and seals the stone of this certainty, *Seeing they crucifie to themselves afresh the Son of God*, and put him to open shame, and make no account of the blood of Christ, and the grace and promise of the Gospel, and of the comfort of the Holy Ghost, and are therefore said to *sin against the Holy Ghost*, because they directly slight, resist, and oppose the gracious office and workings of the holy Spirit.

But I must stay no longer upon the words, by reason of that brevity expected in this Exercise.

Doctrine.

Our Observation: It is the most fearful and dangerous condition in the World, to begin in the Spirit, and end in the Flesh, to rise and fall in Religion, to decay and Apostatize from grace. To have had some work of the Spirit, and the Word upon their hearts, so as to have light, and love, and taste, and gifts, and favour, and seriousness, and hopes, and fears, and after all to cool and give over: Oh how desperate is such a case!

To go to hell with so much of heaven, Oh what a hell is that! *Heb. 10. 26, 27.* For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment, &c. *2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.* For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning; for it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they

they have known to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them, &c.

Such a thing there may be; possibly the Text supposeth it that such may fall, and fall away, totally and finally, only pronounceth an impossibility of their rising again.

Some are said to fall from grace, *Gal. 5. 4.* the stony and thorny ground did so in a Parable. *Demas, Judas, Saul, Hymenæus* did so in good earnest. A great Apostacy was foretold in the first days to let in Antichrist, *2 Thes. 2. 3.* And in the reign of Antichrist more, *1 Tim. 4. 1.* all are warned, *Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall, 1 Cor. 10. 12. Heb. 12. 15. Look diligently lest any fail of, or fall from the grace of God.* Some of *Johns* hearers after a while left him, *Job. 5. 35.* Many of our Saviours hearers quite left him, *Job. 6. 66.* Many of *Pauls* supposed converts were turned away; all they of *Asia, 2 Tim. 1. 15.*

Some have left their Love, *Rev. 2. 3.* Some left the Faith, *1 Tim. 5. 12.* Some have turned after the world, as *Demas, 2 Tim. 4. 10.* Some have turned aside after Satan. And would to God there were no Example to *1 Tim. 5. 15.* be given in our age and observation, it is that which the Professors of a true Religion are more subject to, than those of a false, *Jer. 21. 1. Hath a nation changed their gods which yet are no gods: but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.*

Now there are three falls to which men are subject.

1. Some fall as *Wood or Cork* into the water, sink at first, but get up again, being helped by the hand of divine grace, as *Peter*; or brought off by a Miracle of mercy, as *Paul* and his company after all hopes of safety were quite taken away. *Mat. 14. 31. Act. 27. 30. and 44.*

This the fall of the godly.

2. Some fall as *lead or stone* into the bottom of hell, as *Pharaohs* host into the bottom of the sea, and never rise again, having neither promise of God, nor seed of God to raise them up again, but make a final shipwreck of faith and conscience, and of their souls together. *Exod. 15. 1 Tim. 1. 19*

This the fall of the wicked.

3. There is a *mixed fall* common to both, which is like the falling into an Epidemical Disease whereof many dye, and as many recover, of which in their order.

There are four kinds or degrees of falling, which the people of God are subject to; And four kinds or degrees to which the wicked are subject; and each latter is worse than other in them both. *Four falls of the Godly.*

1. The first and lightest fall of the godly, is that in their daily combat between flesh and spirit, set out *Rom. 7.* at large, and *Gal. 5. 17.*

We cannot do what we would, but fail or fall short after our best endeavors. Our duties are imperfect, graces defective, our gold and silver drossie, our wine mixt with water. Sin deceiveth, surpriseth, captiveth, slayerh, yet reigneth not all this while. It is not I, but sin that dwells in me. I consent to the Law, I delight in the Law of God, even in my inner man, &c.

These falls or slips are unavoidable and involuntary, there is no Saine but complains of them, no duty but is stained with them. In our clearest Sun-shine we see a world of such Moats which yet hinder not the light and comfort of our Justification, and destroy not Sanctification. True grace consists with these, yea, is not separated from the assaults and induelling of such motions. *Will we, Nill we*, said Bernard, *We are pestered with swarms of these Egyptian flies, and have these frogs in our inmost*

Nelimus, uolimus, irruit in nos Egyptianum musca, & chambers.
obstrepunt
Rana in Cubilibus Regis,
Prov. 24.16.

We are none of us Supralapsarians in this sense, but Sub-lapsarians all, yea, and Relapsarians too. The just falleth seven times a day, by this infirmity and riseth again, and taketh no harm, but is kept humble and depending thereby. Every son and daughter of Abraham is kept bound under this spirit of infirmity, to their dying day.

This first fall is but like the fall of a mist in a winter morning, the Sun gets up and it is a fair day after.

This is the first fall: The second is worse, which is

2. An actual and visible stumble as to offence of others, yet occasioned by some surreptitious surprize of temptation, for want of that due consideration which we should always have: this Gal. 6.1. the Apostle calls a mans being overtaken with a fault, who is to be restored with a spirit of meekness, considering we also may be tempted; such falls (or slips rather) all or most are subject to *πολλὰ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτάνει*. Jam. 3.2. In many things we offend all. We sometimes trip, or slip, or miss our hold, so the word signifies, and so down we come, but not out of choice. Thus did Peter slip or halt, Gal. 2.14. when he did Judaize, out of too much compliance with the Jews, whom therefore Paul did rebuke and restore. Thus the Disciples slipt, when they in zeal to Christ would have fire fetcht down from heaven upon those that would not receive them, whom Christ set right with a spirit of meekness.

Luk. 9.54.55.

Gal. 2.14.

These slips or falls are like those of him whose foot is wrenched, or out of joynt, whence he halts till it be set right. Thus Peter is said to halt; he did not *παγαίνεσθαι*, only not *ἐθελοπόρνευ*; but when Paul had set his wrenched foot, he went upright ever after. Hence that word *καταρτίζειν*, Gal. 6.1. restore] is a Chirurgeons word, to set him right, as a bone out of joynt. He that shall be censorious and severe against these

two first kind of falls incident to most, let him, as *Constantine* said to *Aecius* the *Novatian* Bishop, get himself a ladder, and clime up to heaven by him- self he should have but a few come there else. *Socr. l. 1. c. 7*

3. The third fall is much worse, a fall from the third list, whence like *Eutychus* they are taken up dead for the present, but they come to themselves again. These are falls into grosser and more scandalous sins which do *Vastare conscientiam*, set the stacks or Corn-fields of Conscience on fire, whereas the other two forenamed (especially the former) are such as *Tertullian* calls *Quotidianæ Incursumis*, these are very dangerous, and befall not all Professors (they had not need) but now and then one falls into some scandalous sin, but they not usually again into the same sin after sense and repentance of it. Thus fell *David* and *Peter* into foul flagitiousness, but not deliberately, nor totally, nor finally, nor reiteratedly. Sin raged indeed, and seemed to reign for the present, *Moses* hands grew weak, and the hand of *Amaleck* prevailed for the present: But a seed of God was in them, and they could not sin unto death, but were renewed to repentance, and their sins are blotted out. *1 Joh. 3. 2*

This fall is like the fall of the *Leaf* in *Autumn*; life remains safe: a Spring in due time follows, though many a cold blast first.

4. There is yet one worse fall than the former, incident to a child of God too, to be of the decaying hand, and to remit and lose his former fervour and liveliness.

And it may be he never comes (as the second Temple) up to the former pitch and glory. Thus *Solomon's* zeal and love was abated in his old age, as his father *David's* natural heat was in his age, that he needed an *Abishag* to lye in his bosome; so was *Solomon's* spiritual heat cooled by the many *Abishags* that lay in his bosome: and though he was beloved of his God, his Sun set in a cloud, his last was not like his first. Thus *Sampson*, after many triumphs over the Philistims, was at length circumvented and betrayed into their hands, who bound him, put out his eyes, made sport with him, who though his hair and strength grew again, and he dyed in the Quarrel, and dyed a Victor, yet never did he regain his sight or liberty to his dying day. These kind of decays are dangerous, and make the people of God go mourning to their dying day, and they are saved as by fire. But are not inconsistent with grace. *Ezra 3. 12. 1 King. 11. 43. 9. 10. Incipit melius quam desinit. Ultima primis cedunt, dissimilis hic puer, ille senex.*

This is like the fall of the hair in aged persons; life yet remains, but strength, native heat, and radical moistness decay, and the hair never grows alike thick again.

These:

These are the fallings of the children of God, and there are four worse than these follow, of the unregenerate, and each worse than other.

The four falls of the unregenerate.
 1. The first whereof is a *final* fall (but not a *Total* at first) but *insensible* by degrees, *sensim sine sensu*, grow worse and worse, as the *Thorny* ground, choaked with cares, or drowned with the pleasures of the world. This proves like *Elies* fall, they fall *backward*, break their *necks*, and dye of it; and may with him be much lamented and pitied, but they are dead and lost.

2. Some fall *totally* and *finally*, but not *premeditatedly* and *voluntarily* at first, but are driven back by the *Lyon* of Persecution and Tribulation in the way, and they retreat. These endure for a *season*, as the *stony Ground*; and leaving God, they are for ever left and forsaken of him, 1 *Chron.* 28. 9.

This is like the fall of *Sifera* at the feet of *Jacl*, *Judg.* 5. 27. *At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell; where he bowed, he fell and lay down dead.*

3. Some more fearfully, *Totally*, *finally*, *voluntarily*, *deliberately* but not yet *maliciously*. Thus *Demas* is supposed to fall, who of a *forward Disciple* or *Teacher*, is said to have become after an *Idol Priest*. 1 *Sam.* 16. 14. at *Thessalonica*, (so *Dorotheus* reports of him). Thus fell *Saul*, who having rejected the Word of the Lord, the Lord rejected him, and the Spirit of God departed from him, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.

Of these three last, I may say as *Elisha* to *Hazael* of *Benhadad*, 2 *King.* 8. 10. *These may certainly recover, howbeit, saith he, the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely dye.* These have not yet crucified the Son of God afresh, nor done despite to the Spirit of grace, therefore it is not impossible they should be renewed again to repentance.

These are like *Sardis*, *Rev.* 3. 1, 2, 3. may have a name to live, but are dead: Their works not perfect before God, ready to dye, yet are called once again to Repentance, otherwise certain destruction threatened.

But this is like the fall of *Haman*, whose doom was read by his Wife and best Friends, If once thou beginnest to fall, thou shalt not recover, but shalt certainly fall irrecoverably. *Esh.* 6. 13.

And these end fearfully usually, and unpitied spectacles of Gods wrath, to astonish and warn others, as *Spira* once.

4. The fourth and last fall follows, which is like the opening of the fourth Seal, and the fourth horse appears, a *pale horse*, and he that sate on

on him is called Death, and Hell followed with him. When men fall *Totally*, finally, voluntarily, and maliciously: Thus Simon Magus, Julian the Apostate, Hymeneus and Alexander, whose names are in Gods black book. Here the Gulf is fixed, and there is a *nulla retrorsum* hence. These are not to be renewed by repentance.

This fall is like that of *Jericho's* walls, they fell down flat with a curse Josh. 6. 20. annexed, or as *Babylon's* walls, with a *Vengeance*, both without hope: of Jer. 51. 58. repairing. Or like the fall of *Lucifer* the first Apostate, without offer, or hope of offer of grace any more for ever; or like the fall of *Judas*, Act. 1. 18. who falling headlong burst asunder in the night, and all his bowels gushed out.

There is also another kind of fall, of a mixt or middle nature, and to The mixt fall which side of the two, *Godly* or *Reprobate*, I should cast, it is not so easie to determine, A reiterated fall into some foul act or course of sin: and herein I must proceed as warily as the Priest of old in a doubtful case of *Leprosie*, whether to pronounce *Clean* or *Unclean*, and by his rule I shall Lev. 13. 4. 5; go. He was to shut him up seven days, and look upon him better ere he 6. &c. could give his *Definitive* sentence. If therefore,

1. I see the sore be but *skin-deep*,] Lev. 13. 4. & 34. and have not corrupted the blood:

2. If it stand at a stay and spread not further] v. 5, 6. So also v. 23, 28, 34, 37.

3. If all become white] by repentance and mortification, I shall pronounce him *clean*. It is a *scab*, it is but a *scab*, v. 6. or a *scall*, v. 34. It is no deadly *Leprosie*.

But on the other side, 1. If it be deeper than the skin] (having taken the heart with the love and liking of it) v. 20, 25, 30.

2. If it spread further and further] by renewed acts, ver. 8. 27. 36.

3. If there be proud raw flesh in the rising, v. 10, 14, 15. and the man presumptuously live in it, and plead for it, I shall pronounce him *unclean*, it is an old *Leprosie*, v. 11. It is not the spot of Gods children, Deut. 35. 5.

Concerning Relapses, I shall desire you to take notice of these eight observations.

1. It is very observable that the Holy Ghost is very sparing in setting down in the Scriptures instances in this kind, well foreseeing how apt flesh and blood is to abuse and pervert such Examples to their own destruction: Such examples are as *Simen* said of *Christ*, set for the fall Luk. 2. 34. and rising again of many, and are a sign spoken against. How have *Davids* and *Peters* falls emboldned many to fall and live in sin. There is

not one instance in all Scripture of any Saint that laid violent hands upon himself, lest any should presume to do the like. But one Example of late Repentance accepted, lest many should presume; yet one left any should despair. Those falls are not set as Land-marks to guide you, but as Sea-marks to warn you.

2. It is certain Paul returned not to persecute the Church after his Conversion; or Manasse to re-erect Idolatry, or Mattathew to the Receipt of Custom after he was called thence.

3. Nor did David and Peter fall again into the same foul act of sin after they had truly repented.

4. They were only wicked ones as Ahab, Pharaoh, Saul, Jeroboam, who perished and return to sinful courses, from drunkenness to thirst, from thirst to drunkenness. Of Jeroboam it is said; After this (the Prophets warning, his Arm smitten, his prayer thereupon, the recovery upon the Prophets prayer) did he return again, and made of the lowest of the people Priests of his high places, &c. Neither warning, nor judgments, nor mercies could work any amendment in him.

1 Joh. 3. 9.

1 Joh. 5. 19.

5. It is certain that *he who is born of God doth not commit sin*, so as to make a trade of it, returning to his Vomit: But *he that is born of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not*. He hath paid too dear for such a miscarriage, it was not so light a matter to lie under Gods wrath, lose his former peace, nor was his comfort so soon restored, and Gods favour regained, that he should hazard all anew, and buy Repentance at so dear a rate.

Deut. 29. 18,
19, 20.

6. Very dreadful is that threat of God: *If there be among you man or woman—or a root that beareth gall and wormwood: And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this Curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, adding drunkenness to thirst. The Lord will not spare him, but the Anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smite against that man, and all the curses that are written in this Book shall lye upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate (and single him out) unto evil, &c.*

7. Obs. Relapses into sin are like Relapses into a Disease after hopes and beginning of recovery, if by taking cold, or want of heed taking, or other disorder the disease return, and the man down again, this is worse than the first ill fit, and long e're such recover. But if as soon as he get a little strength he fall into a new Relapse, we reckon his case very doubtful, if not desperate.

8. Yet it is not to be denied, but there are some sins of humane infirmity

firmly which though repented of, a godly person may be again overtaken with and foyled, yet not his last end worse than his beginning. Thus was *Jonah* overtaken with his passion a second time, *Abraham* with his excusatory lye, the Disciples after a former rebuke a second time contending for superiority.

Mat. 20. 25.
with Luk. 22.
25.

The first fall in this kind I should liken to a sad and dangerous fall, by which one hath broken a bone in his leg or arm, which though it put him to much pain is well set again, and he becomes as strong as before, but more wary while he lives; *David* speaks of his fall into sin, that it was as a breaking of his bones. But a second fall, is like the breaking of the bone the second time, which is more hardly set, and puts to more pain, and it may be the man feels it at times to his dying day.

But a third or more frequent relapse, is like the putting of an arm out of joynt, again and again, not being well bound and looked to in time, becomes habitually loose and never keeps the place: so it is here, *Cretans* and frequent acts of sin beget an habit, and custom in sin, and then as soon may the *Ethiopian* change his skin, and the *Leopard* his spots, as one accustomed to do evil, ever learn to do well.

Bernard describes the steps of sin, how it comes to its height. First time it is importable, next time heavy, no more importable, then easie, then light, then sweet, at last necessary; and what was at first importable to be committed, is now impossible to be omitted. And *St. Austin* confirms this by a story of his own Mother, who by sipping of the Cup at first when she filled the Wine, learnt at last to take almost whole Cups, *Qui modica non spernit paulatim decedit*, is his good note upon it, He that makes a small matter of small sins, is in the ready way to fall into the greatest. Every new relapse into a former sin, is like the adding of a new figure to the first *Cypher*, which raiseth the sinners account ten or an hundred times more.

Primo importabile, processu temporis grave, paulo post leve, postea placet & suave est, ad extremum, quod erat importabile ad faciendum, est impossibile ad continendum, Bern. de Conf. Ex voluntate perversa facta est consuetudo, & dum consuetudini non resistitur facta est necessitas. Aug. conf. l. 8. Ad illud modicum, quotidiana modica addendo in eam consuetudinem lapsa erat, ut prope jam plenos uero calculos inhiante hauriret. Confes. lib. 9.

Therefore if thou hast been overtaken once, stop and be humbled, and say, once I have spoken, or done amiss, but I will not answer to plead for my self; beware the second time, the second fall, as the second blow makes the fray: but if a second time, say you twice, but I will proceed no further: but be sure thou take heed of drawing sin with a threefold cord, or cart-rope: this threefold cord is not easily broken, take heed of a third act; fear, and the pit, and the snare are before thee: Oh bold and presumptuous sinner: if thou escape the fear (of the first act) thou

Job 40. 4, 5.
Isa. 5. 18.
Eccl. 4. 12.
Isa. 24. 17, 18.

mayst perish in the pit (for the second) but if thou escape the pit, thou wilt be taken in the snare (the third time) upon the ungodly, God raises snarers; God gives once to a reprobate mind, and they are gone. Think not after a third or fourth act of presumptuous sin, to go and shake thyself (by prayer and repentance) as Sampson once, and that thy strength may return to thee to be delivered from these Philistines which lye in wait for thee, he did so but with nois (till he found it by woful experience) that the Lord was departed from him; so may it be with thee, therefore be warned.

Use 1. This 1. informs us that possible it is for men (yea, too ordinary) to fall from grace: The Text supposeth it; and in another place, Heb 12. 15. the Apostle Items us to look diligently, lest any fall from the grace of God, the Angels did so at first, and Adam soon after, and that which was *Morbis Angelicus* then, is *Morbis Anglicus* now. The Lord may complain of us, as justly as ever he did of Israel, My people are bent to back sliding from me, Hosea 11. 7. and Isaiah 1. 5. Why should ye be smitten any more, ye will revolt more and more: and Jer. 8. 5. Why is this people slidden back by perpetual backslidings? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. This is, and of late hath been the case and Epidemical Disease of England. It is no new thing to see the sons of fallen man to fall, and fall away. Saul, Joash, Amaziah, Judas, Demas, Alexander fell away of old. Of all Israel that came out of Egypt with Moses and Aaron, only two, Caleb and Joshuah, followed God fully. Numb. 14. 24. Of the four grounds in the Parable only one held out. Many of John Baptists hearers left him and fell away, Job. 5. 35. Many of Christs hearers and disciples, Job. 6. 65. Many of Peters, 2 Pet. 2. 20. Many of Pauls, 2 Tim. 1. 15. and 1 Tim. 5. 15. Many of John the Evangelists hearers, 1 Job. 2. 19. They went out from us, because they were not of us, for had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us. But none of these were ever sincere Christians and sound at the heart.

We wonder not to see an house built on the sand to fall, or seed not having root wither, or trees in the parched Wilderness decay, Jer. 17. 6. or Meteors vanish, or Blazing-stars fall, or Clouds without rain blown about, or Wells without Springs dried up. So for Hypocrites to prove Apostates no strange thing, and utterly to fall away. There are four wills some have observed. 1. The Divine will never alters or turns. 2. The Angels will hath turned, never returns. 3. The will of man fallen turned, and in conversion returns. 4. The will of Apostates, after that grace received

ceived and abused *turns* away and never returns; but becomes like the fallen Angels.

2. Even godly and gracious persons are subject to fall, and therefore must not be secure, they *must work out their salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12. they are bidden to *fear lest they should fall short*, Heb. 4. 1. *Stand fast*, 1 Cor. 16. 13. *Take heed lest they fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Look diligently lest any fail of* (or *fall from*, so is the other reading) *the grace of God*, Heb. 12. 15. *Take the whole armour of God that they may be able to stand*, Eph. 6. 12.

Even the very Elect have this root of bitterness and seeds of Apostasy within them. Even Peter had sunk if Christ had not put forth his hand to save him from the water, *Mat. 14. 31.* and had been *winnowed as chaff*, if Christ had not prayed for him that his *faith should not fail*.

Luk. 22. 31.
32.

Let not him therefore that puts on his harness boast, as he that puts it off, 1 King. 20. 11.

3. Yet a truly regenerate soul, a plant of Gods planting by the waterside; a plant or graffe grafted into Christ, and rooted in Christ, can never fall away totally or finally: Peter could not when Christ prayed for him. The Elect cannot, *Mat. 24. 24.* In the general Apostasy of the Chrillian world, and the greatest persecutions under Rome-pagan, and Rome-pseudo-Christian (Antichristian both times) when all the world wandered after the Dragon and the Beast: they who had their names written in the Lambs book held out, and warped not, *Rev. 13. 8.* and 17. 8. The Elect are as Mount Sion that cannot be moved, and are as fixed stars that fall not. The house on the Rock stands firm in all weathers. The Tree by the waters side, *Jer. 17. 8.* Seed in good ground, *Mat. 13.* They who have a seed of God in them cannot so sin, 1 Joh. 3. 9. And they that are born of God, 1 Joh. 5. 18. They who are in the hand of Christ, none can pluck them out, *Joh. 10. 28.*

Yet as to the fallings of the Elect (not presuming to tell you the *minimum* or *summmum quod sic*) we shall make these concessions; or observations.

I. We grant that the godly, as well as others, are subject to this falling-sickness, having seeds of Apostasy in them; and would certainly fall irrecoverably, if left to themselves. By strength (his own) *no man shall prevail or stand*, 1 Sam. 29. *In te has & non has, Aug.*

2. Grace received truly sanctifying is not for its measure so great, or for its nature so immutable and invincible, but might be overborn and would, if not divinely supported and continually supplied; as the

Widows oyl kept from decay, fed by a Spring of *Auxiliary* grace; as
 Gen. 49. 22. *Josephs bow* abode in strength by the arm of God, and his bough green and
 23. 24. fruitful, fed by a well of living water: so that it is not the grace in us;
Gratiagratiam but the grace with us: grace supervening, and additional which keeps
postulat. us from falling. Even the good ground were it not for the influence
 of the Sun and Rain, would prove as the Stony and Thorny
 1 Cor. 15. 10. Ground.

3. *Posit.*

3. There is no such state of consistency in the effectually called, but
 there is a daily combat, and oft-times a great inequality in his Pulse;
 sometimes *Amsleck*, sometimes *Israel prevails*, and this war lasts not, as
 2 Sam. 3. 1. that between the house of *Saul* and *David*, for certain years: but as
 1 King. 14. 30 that between *Rehoboam* and *Jeroboam* all their days.

Paul sometimes as in the third heaven, crys out, We are more than
 Conquerors, who shall separate us from the love of God, &c. sometimes
 as under foot, crys out, *Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from*
this body of death.

4. Even godly persons may fall for once, very foully, as *Peter*; yea,
 lye long, as *David*: it is hard to say how low they may fall, and how
 long they may lye, yet sin not unto death, as the Sun is for many months
 absent from some Climates, yet returns again; so that they may then
 say with the Church, *Rejoyce not against me, O mine enemy, when I*
fall I shall arise, when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto
me.

5. *Posit.*

5. There may also possibly be a relapse, or falling a-new into the
 same act of sin through humane infirmity, as *Abraham* twice denying
 his Wife, the Disciples twice contending for Supremacy. And as I will
 not say how oft thy brother trespassing, and repenting, is to be forgi-
 ven, not to seven, but to seventy times seven: so I cannot say how oft
 through infirmity a sinner trespassing, and returning with repentance
 may be forgiven, Gods mercies and thoughts being so far above
 mans.

6. *Posit.*

6. The Christian may, as to his own sense, be reduced to a very sad
 and low state. 1. He is poor in spirit, he mourns, he hungers, thirsts,
 pants, doubts, dislikes all. 2. He judgeth of himself as (under present
 prevalency of corruption) *Carnal*, sold under sin, a forced slave to it;
 Rom. 7. 14. 3. As if nothing had been done yet, and all was to do, he
 begs, O God, create a new heart in me, Psal. 51. 4. He may be apt to
 conclude against himself, I never did yet truly believe or repent; and
 which is worse, with *Thomas*, I never shall believe. 5. In this case he
 lies bound, as *Peter*, and cannot help himself till the Angel comes and
 strikes

Joh. 20. 25.
 Act. 12. 6, 7.

strikes off the bands, and opens the iron gate. 6. And, as to comfort, he may be at an utter loss, *walk in darknes*, Isa. 50. 10. judge himself cut off, Ezek. 37. 11. *his hope perished*, Lam. 3. 18. God hiding his face, Satan shewing his teeth, casting forth a flood, and shooting in a peal of fiery darts, *Curse God and die*. Thou art mine as sure as death, as sure of damnation, as I my self. Then how doth a poor soul mourne! I am forsaken and quite cast out of sight, I am as a bottle in the smoak (of hell) like a broken vessel, or fire-brand reserved for hell: as possible for this *Venice-glass*, said that distressed Gentlewoman Mrs. Honeywood, not to be broken when it falls on the ground, as for me to escape the damnation of hell. God can do much, saith he, but doth *he shew wonders among the dead*, Psal. 88. 10. Then pray he would, but cannot, hope he would, but cannot, believe he would, but dare not, fear he would not, but must resolve he would to cast himself upon God, but he sees his resolution set another way, and he cannot he thinks change it, therefore doth he not go about it. To God he saith, *I am cast out of thy sight*, Psal. 31. 22. To Satan, *Vicisti Satana, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?* to despair I yield, but call not for quarter, nor beg I mercy; To affliction he saith, I am in the belly of hell, the weeds and chains of hell wrap me about; Jon. 2. 2. To Ministers and other friends he saith, *Stand away, go not about to comfort me*, Isa. 22. 4. To promises and experience he saith in his halle, All are Lyars.

Yet may the tide turn, and the Sun of Righteousness arise after a long winter, and continual night as in those remote Climates, who sit in the region and shadow of death, and come *with bealing under his wings*; and he may cry out, Rejoyce with me, I have found him whom my soul loveth; the lost sheep is found by the good shepherd, the lost Saviour is found, Luke 2. the lost Starr teen again, Mat. 2. And the utterly despairing hopes of salvation are disappointed by a safe, though hazardous coming to land, Acts 27. 20, and 44.

For Gods Election stands firm, and his love is unchangable, and his gifts without repentance; and the undertaking of Christ is to keep his to the end, that none shall pluck them out of his hand; and whom he gives himself for, he presents them spotless and blameless before his Father.

Therefore are the Godly as firm and safe from utter falling away, as Mount *Sion* from being removed, or an house on a rock from being subverted.

Here follows an Use of Terroure, and speaks to four Sorts.

1. This

Gratia nec totaliter intermissitur, nec finaliter amittitur. Alius omissitur, habitum non amittitur; alius pervertitur, si des non subvertitur; concutitur, non excutitur, destruitur, fructum, later succus; jus ad regnum amittunt demeritorie, non effe-dive, Prid. Effectus justificationis suspenditur, at status justificationis non dissolvitur. Suff. Brit.

2 *71, e of*
Terrour.
Hic videmus
quanta sit Apo-
stasia atrocitas
nihil ad tam
bomicidia, a-
dulteria, furta,
Et. Par. in lo.

1. This Text is thunder and lightning against Apostates. Awake you drowsie Professors. There is no sin like Apostacy: Adulteries, Man-slaughter, Theft, Idolatries, &c. nothing to this; No impossible written over them, they have been renewed to repentance, 1 Cor. 6. 10, 11. *Mary Magdalens* seven unclean spirits; and *Manasses* ten or more, not so bad as the unclean spirit going out, and a return with an *Ogdeas malorum spirituum*, as *Irenaeus* calls it, with seven other spirits more besides it self. Thou art in the high-way to perdition, to the sin against the Holy Ghost. Sins and judgments meet together in this sin. The Cataracts of upper and neather springs, all the windows of heaven and fountains of the great deep, (as in that great Deluge, Gen. 11.) are broken up to drown thee in perdition. Thy sins making way for more judgments, and this judgment making way for more sins: till between these two seas thy soul (as that vessel, *Act. 27. 41.*) is eternally shipwrackt.

If thou art not altogether past feeling, crucifying the Son of God afresh, and treading his Blood and Covenant under foot. I sound this Trumpet to warn thee, or to deliver my own soul, Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent; and do thy first works, Rev. 2. 5. Be watchful and strengthen what is ready to die, Rev. 3. 2. Haste, escape for thy life, look not behind thee, as was said to Lot, or as *Jonathan* in another case, Away, make speed, haste, stay not.

2. This speaks terrour to Professors fallen, or lying in scandalous sins, you cannot sin at so easie a rate as others, you know your Masters will and do it not, therefore shall be beaten with more stripes. You are as a City set on a hill, your fault cannot be hid, no more than an Eclipse of the Sun: when the Moon or other Stars totally Eclipse, no notice is taken of them. You make the enemies of Religion blaspheme, or deride godliness, you make the Lords people to transgress, your sins are more infectious then others, your repentance had need be extraordinary, not only for pardon which you haply may obtain, but for the scandal which others may take which you cannot possibly prevent.

3. Terrour to such as after conviction and engagements under affliction and distress, after some prayers, vows, and a begun, or resolved reformation, return to former courses, as they after what they promised in their distress, Jer. 34. 15, 16. returned when delivered, and started aside like a broken bow. The new broom of affliction swept the house clean for the present, but afterwards the unclean spirit returns, and this washed Sow is wallowing in the mire again.

4. Such as lapse and relapse into the same sin again, as *Pharaoh*, *Jeroboam*,

rebeam, and those Antichristian brood, Rev. 9. 20, 21. which repented not; notwithstanding all judgments, convictions, confessions, promises, go from evil to worse; from affliction to sin, from sin to duty, and from duty to sin; repent and sin, sin and repent; and from repenting of sin in distress, go to repent of their repentance when delivered. *Pharash unsaith* all he had said, and saith his repentance backward; as the doer turneth and returneth on the hindges, is sometimes shut, by and by open again; so these in no constant posture, their goodness like a morning dew, a little devotion in a morning, for all companies till night comes, then a little evening dew again; *Amphibia* that live in both Elements, *Modo Ecclesius, modo theatra replentes*, now you see them at a Sermon, anon at a Play-house, as *Solomons* Harlot sacrificing in the morning, prostituting her self to all filthiness at night, or as *Solomons* drunken beast, that hath had knocks and blows, yet being besotted with his drink, or company, saith, *They have stricken me and beaten me, but I felt it not, when I awake I shall seek it again*; or as *Eseys* debauched watchmen, who having drunk sufficiently one day, say they will do as much to morrow, and more too, and so had their drinking matches and rantings from day to day.

The third Use is of Discrimination, to discover who is clean and who unclean in respect of falls and relapses; and to put a difference between the holy and prophane, which is the proper work of a faithful Prophet: to some we are to open the door of hope, to some to shut it: every sin is not a sin to death; every disease not the Plague; every Ulcer not a Leprosie.

1. There are some who have fallen into foul sins, and they think their case desperate, because of the greatness of their sins; but their sin is not the sin against the Holy Ghost, because not committed after lights, taste, partaking of the Holy Ghost, &c. but in the days of their ignorance, as Paul once: some fall foully after conversion, as Peter, but not deliberately, maliciously, and both these may be the sports of children, they see the plague in their hearts, feel the smart, these have foul scabs, but they go to Jordan and wash, go to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and then though their sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though red like crimson, they shall be as white as wool.

2. There be some Relapses through humane infirmity, which are truly bewailed, this is not the sin against the Holy Ghost neither. Come into the Camp, I pronounce such clean: For 1. there is no raw flesh of pride and presumption in them. 2. All is turned white, by true repentance:

Lev. 13. 4, 5. *penitence: it is a scab, and but a scab.* 3. It is but *skin-deep*, the heart 6, 14. *was not tainted.* 4. It standeth at a *stay*. These four signs shew it to be no Plague of Leprosie: such are not to be shut up, or put out of the Camp. And God as he pardoneth iniquity, transgression, and sin, so he promiseth to heal and pardon *their back-slidings*, Hosea 14. 4. Jer. 3. 22.

3. But there are others that make a trade of sin, *drink up iniquity like water*, that add *Drunkenness to thirst*, and fall and rise, and rise and fall: they lapse and relapse, and slide away as water, shall I say such *shall have peace*? No, what peace to such so long as their sins remain, *the wrath of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and he shall blot out his name from under heaven.*

Call not this *a scab*, this is the Plague of Leprosie, this is more than *skin-deep*, this doth not stand at a *stay*, here is proud *raw flesh*, this is an *old sore*, thou must out of the Camp, thou art unclean. God will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of him that goeth on still in his trespasses.

I shall to conclude give a few short Directions, to prevent Falls and Relapses, but cannot now enlarge upon them.

Mat. 26. 41. 1. *Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.* This is the old and great receipt, and daily experimented with every ordinary Saint, *probatum est*, watch in prayer, watch after, watch when alone, watch when in company, especially against ill Company and all occasions of sin.

2. Keep conscience tender, and shun the first motions, and occasions of sin: if thou find thy self given to appetite, put a knife to thy throat, is the wise mans counsel, if to wine, look not on the glass; if to wantonness, come not near her corner: the consecrated Nazarite must not only forbear the wine, but the grape; and not only the juyce, but the husk and kernel of it.

3. Take heed of having slight thoughts of sin, as to say, as long as it is no worse, it is the first time, it is but now and then, a great chance, when I meet with such company, and many have such foolish pleas, and so play at the mouth of the Cockatrice Den till they are stung to death.

Dent. 29. 19. 4. Of having light thoughts of Gods mercy, *I shall have peace*, I shall have mercy when I do but ask, *At what time soever*, will save me: we cannot out-sin the mercy of God, when sin abounds, grace super-abounds, &c. The Lord saith, *he will not spare such, nor be merciful to them.*

5. Take

5. Take heed of reasoning from Gods temporal forbearance, to eternal forgiveness. *Because sentence is not speedily executed against an evil doer, Eccles. 8. 11, his heart is fully set in him to do evil: but though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, &c. yet it shall not be well with the wicked at last.* 12.

6. Take heed of presuming of thy own strength, I can, and I mean to repent, I can when I will, and I will when time serves: I trust I am not so bad, that God hath not given me over; many have gone further than I, why may I not repent at last hour? *Qui promittit penitenti veniam, non promittit peccanti penitentiam.*

7. Take heed of a mock-repentance, saying, I cry God-mercy, God forgive me, I sin daily and repent daily, when I have sworn or been drunk, I am heartily sorry: Is not this repentance? I answer no, Repentance is quite another thing: the burnt child, we say, *dreads the fire*; Thou hast smarted for suretiship, and hast repented of it: thy friend comes again and desires thee to be bound with him once again, thou relieft, I have paid dear for suretiship already, I have repented of my folly, I have resolved to come into bonds again no more, no not for the best friend I have, thou art importuned by many arguments, but, peremptorily refusest: urge me no more, I have vowed and resolved against, and have made an oath, I would never be taken in that fault again. Now I believe thee, that thou hast truly repented of suretiship, why dost thou not thus, when thou art enticed unto sin again? why dost thou not say? I have smarted, confessed, bewailed, been heartily sorry for my former folly: now speak no more of it, *I have sworn and will perform it, to keep Gods Commandments.* Away from me ye wicked, I must keep the Commandments of my God. This would be somewhat like true repentance. But take heed of a mock-repentance, lest as true repentance meets with a true pardon, thy mock-repentance should be answered with a mock-pardon, as *Tertullian* excellently saith, there be some that say (saith he) their heart is good, they fear God, grieve for sin, though yet they fall into sin, they can, *salva fide & metu, peccare, &c. sic & ipsi salva venia in gehennam detrudentur, dum salvo metu peccant.* They can live in sin, nevertheless notwithstanding their faith and repentance, and God can damn them nevertheless notwithstanding his mercies and promises and pardoning grace. True repentance among other companions is always attended with these three, *what carefulness, what indignation, what fear bath it wrought in you?* *Psal. 119. 106. Psal. 119. 115. De Penitent.*

8. Consider sin reiterated riseth high, adds another figure to increase thy account, *Is the sin of Peor too little for you* (old sins in ignorance) *but that you must this day again turn away anew.* The Lord keeps

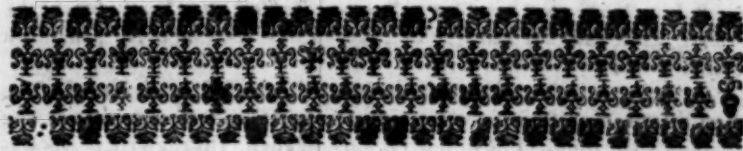
an account how often and how often, thou hast committed such and such a sin, at length saith, for *three transgressions, and for four I will not turn away their punishment*: When Israel had seen Gods works forty years, and tempted him ten times, he swore they should not enter into his rest. In the Law if an Oxe did gore a man, and the Master knew not of it, the Oxe should die, not the Owner: but if the Oxe was wont to push with his horn, and the Master was told of it, Oxe and Master were both to die.

Josh. 22. 27.
Am. 1. and 2.
chap.
Numb. 14. 22.
Ex. 21. 28, 29

Lastly, though I will not say to thee, who art a frequent Relapsarian, it is *impossible*, as to the malicious relapser; yet I say, Remember that every time the bone is broken the more danger; and though thou mayst possibly after a second breaking have it well set, yet thou mayst at times against weather, specially when in years, feel it to thy dying day, thy sins will lye down with thee in thy grave; and in sickness and trouble thou wilt possess the sins of thy youth. I conclude all, as St. Jude concludes his Epistle, *Now to him that is able to keep you from (all) falling (and relapses) and to present you faultless before his presence with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, now and for ever, Amen.*

Job 13. 26

How



How may we be so Spiritual, as to check Sin in the first risings of it.

Gal. 5. 16.

Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

THe Case of Conscience to be discussed this Morning from these words, is—How a Christian may be able to check sin in the first risings of it?

And without controversie great is this Mystery of godliness, and if any other, of inestimable use and moment in the practise of Christianity. As the title which Solomon inscribes on the Frontis-piece of that divine Poem of his, *the Canticles*, is, שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים, the Song of Songs: And as Aristotle calls the Hand, the Instrument of Instruments, and the Mind, the Form of Forms: so may we with as just a reason style this holy skil, of arresting, and intercepting sin in its earliest motions & overtures, the *Art of Arts*. Could the Chymists ever compass their *grand Elixir*, it were but a poor and cheap trifle, in comparison of this *grand Secret* of the School of Christ. So that the Case of Conscience before us, (like *Diana of the Ephesians*) is great and illustrious amidst its fellows.

My Text presents us with it resolved in this excellent Rule of sanctification, *Walk in the Spirit, &c.*

Wherein we have, 1. The principle and root of sin and evil, the flesh

with its *lusts*. 2. The opposite principle and root of life and righteousness, *the divine Spirit*. 3. The terms and bounds of a Christians conquest, how far he may hope for victory---*Ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh*. 4. The method and way of conquering---*Walk in the Spirit*. Of each a word.

1. The principle and root of sin and evil, the flesh with its lusts. The Apostle meaneth (pardon the phrase) a spiritual flesh, not that of the body, but the mind. The immortal souls of men, through their Apostasy from God, the blessed source, and original of all goodness, are become carnal, *Rom. 4. 7*. There is a principle of evil radicated in the very nature, interwoven in the very frame, and births, and constitution of all men; a byass that turns us off in large and wide aberrations from the paths of life and happiness, but with notorious partiality seduceth us into the ways of sin and death. This the Scripture calls the ^a *old man*, the ^b *law of*

^a Eph. 4. 22.

^b Rom. 7. 23.

24.

Plat. in Ψ .
Xoyovia.

fin in our members, and the *body of death*, &c.
The wiser Heathen, felt by the very dictate of Reason, that humane nature was not either as it should be, or as they could have wisht it, what meaneth else that *ἀσπερία, ἀσπορόντος*, that hanging, and flagging of the souls wings, that drooping of her noblest faculties, and that fatal unweildiness, and untractableness of the will to virtue, which the Platonists so much complain of? and what meaneth that *ἀνάγκη πολλὰ τῷ θεῷ δυσμαχεῖν, καὶ ἰσχυρίζεσθαι*, that reluctancy to the divine life, and that impetuous hurry, and propension wherewith they felt themselves driven headlong towards folly, and sensuality?

This *flesh* in man, this corrupt and depraved nature, is perpetually fly-blown with evil lustrings. This body of death, like a rotten carcase, is constantly breeding vermine, as a filthy quagmire, a noisome *Mephitis* or *Camarina*, sends out stench and unfavouriness. This Region of the *luffer World* (like *Africa* in the greater) swarms with Monsters, it is the valley of the shadow of death, *a habitation for Dragons, and a Court for Owls, where dwells the Cormorant and the Bittern, the Raven, the Screech-owl, and the Satyr*, If I may allude to that of the Prophet; *Isa. 34. 11, 12, 13, 14*. The Apostle sets down elegantly the whole pedigree and lineage of evil, *Jam. 1. 15*. *Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death*. Lust is the root of bitterness, fruitful in all the unfruitful works of darkness, and these, like the Apples of *Sodom*, and Clusters of *Gomorrab*, if you gather them, crumble into dust and ashes of death; they are fruits nigh unto a curse, and whose end is to be burnt. That is the first: The *old Adam*, the flesh with its lusts,

Heb. 6. 8.

2. We

2. We have here the *second Adam*, who is a quickning Spirit, 1 Cor. 15. 45. There is in good and holy souls an immortal seed, a principle of life and righteousness, an antidote to the former poison, for the law of the Spirit of life which is in Jesus Christ hath made us free from the law of sin and death, Rom. 8. 2. Philo the Jew, or whoever was the Author of that noble Tract in the *Apocrypha*, called the Wisdom of Solomon, Wild. 7. 6. styles it, --- *The unspeotted Mirror of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty*. Every one that is in Christ is (a) a new creature, (b) born again, (c) and made partaker of the divine nature, for it is the royalty of that King of Saints --- (d) *Behold I make all things new*. The Divine Spirit, that great and heavenly Archew is busie in holy souls, that mighty principle of life, is counter-working the flesh, and its lusts. So that now the weapons of a Christians warfare are mighty through God, for the pulling down of strong holds, and the captivating every imagination yea, bringing every thoughts into the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5, 17.

3. Here are the terms and bounds of the Spirits conquests in this present life, at which a Christians hopes and endeavours must take aim, not the extirpating, but subduing, not the not having, but the not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh; the flesh will be lusting, that accursed womb will be conceiving in the regenerate themselves. But here is the Christians priviledge, that while he walks in the Spirit, those conceptions shall prove abortive.

4. The words entirely, and in sum, present us with the method and way of conquering, with the art of circumventing sin in the first avenues, and approaches of it. *Walk in the Spirit*, &c. this is the *ivy*, the great and *Achilles* Stratagem against the powers of darkness, the true and only course we are to take, if we would strangle the brats of night and bell in their very birth, and crush the Cockatrices egg, whilst it is hatching, and before it excludes the Serpent.

So that in fine the Observation which resulteth, is this:

The best expedient in the world not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, is to walk in the Spirit, which what it imports, I come now to shew.

1. *Walk in the Spirit*, i.e. in obedience to Gods Commandments which are the *Oracles of the Spirit*; that this is excellently preventive of fulfilling the motions to sin, appeareth Psal. 119. 1, 2, 3. Blessed are the *undefiled in the way*, who walk in the Law of the Lord: Blessed are they that keep his Testimonies, they also do no iniquity; again a little lower, ver. 9. *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word*. Aristotle that great Dicta-

Circus in viti-
um flecti mo-
niscibus asper
Hor. ar. Poet.

tor in Philosophy, despaired of atchieving so great an enterprize, as the rendering a *young man* capable of his *ἡδὺν καὶ κερδύματα*, his grave and severe Lectures of Morality; for that age is leight and foolish, yet head-strong and untractable. Now, take a *young man* all in the heat and boyling of his blood, in the highest fermentation of his youthful lusts, and at all these disadvantages, let him enter that great School of the holy Spirit, the divine Scripture, and permit himself to the conduct of those blessed Oracles, and he shall effectually be convinced, by his own experience, of the incredible vertue, the vast and mighty power of Gods word, in the success it hath upon him, and in his daily progressions, and advances in heavenly wisdom. Let me invite you then this day, in the Prophets words, *Isa. 2. 5. O house of Jacob come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.* And what that is David tells us, *Psal. 119. 105. Thy words are a light to my feet, and a lamp to my paths,* and *Hol. 6. 5. His judgments are as a light that goeth forth.* Order thy steps by his word, and thou shalt not tread awry, let the Law of thy God be in thine heart, and sin which is the transgression of the Law, shall not come nigh thee: walk in this broad day-light of the Sun of Righteousness shining in the Scriptures, and thou shalt have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. This was the practise, and experience too of the man after Gods own heart, *I have bid thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee,* *Psal. 119. 11.* It is good writing after the Copy of so great a Master, Go thou and do likewise.

μεταβάλλει
εἰς ἄλλο γέ-
νη.

2. *Walk in the spirit, i. e.* as becometh those in whom Gods Spirit dwells, as if the Apostle had said, the part which ye are now to act, O ye Christian Galatians, it is that of *new creatures*: see that ye keep the *Decorum*. Demean your selves like the *children of God*, who are led of the Spirit of God, *Rom. 8. 14.* Be true to your part, fill it up, adorn it, and then sure enough, ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, for that were to act the part just contrary to what you sustain: as he that is to represent upon the stage some generous and heroick person, cannot do the least base and sordid thing, but he breaks his part, and digresseth into the garb, and posture of a vile and abject person: whilst he is true to his part, he cannot possibly do any thing that is absurd, and misbecoming.

Some of the *Nethinim* stood continually Porters at the door of the Temple, to keep out whatsoever was unclean, and hereunto the Apostle palpably alludeth, *1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. Know ye not that ye are the Temples of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you: now if any*
man

man defile the Temple of God, him will God destroy; for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are. So then that which the Rule amounts to by this interpretation is, *Walk in the Spirit*, * i.e. *Walk as becomes the Temples of the Holy Ghost*, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

That a good mans soul is a Temple

which God

inhabits, the Philosophers acknowledg; and that the honour and worship rendred to him in a pure and holy mind, is incomparably more worthy and acceptable, than all the costliest sacrifices and offerings in Temples made with hands, how magnificent soever. *Μὴ γὰρ οἷς τιμῶν δ' ἀποδοχὴν τῷ θεῷ ἐσώτῃς, τὸν αὐτὸν παρὰ σκιδάων τῶν ψυχῆς διὰ καὶ θαλάσσης τύπον διακρίσεις ἐπιγῆς. Δεῖς ἐκ ἔχουσιν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς συμμέρεσι λέγων· Ἐσθίσεις δὲ βρωτοῖς γάρυμας τόσον ὅσον ἐλάμψῃ.* Hierocl. in Pythag. aur. carm. p. 28.

8. *Walk in the Spirit*, i.e. Fulfill the counsels and advices of the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Every renewed soul is the Scen and Stage, wherein the two mightiest Contraries in the World, the Spirit and the Flesh, i.e. Light and Darknes, Life and Death, Heaven and Hell, Good and Evil, *Michael* and his Angels, and the Dragon with his, are perpetually combating hand to hand. And well it is for a Christian that the Holy Spirit is lusting in him against the flesh, *ἀγαναδὶς δ' τοῦ θεοῦ βρῆσιν*, God takes thy part, Christian, the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts is with thee, if thou dost not sin and grieve him away. Follow but thy Leader, be prompt and ready to start at the Divine signal, when the Holy Ghost displays his Ensignes, then *μετ' ἰχθυῶν βαίνει θεοῖο*, March presently forth under those mighty and victorious banners, and thou shalt become *Invincible*. * When a Christian goeth out thus to warfare, following the Almighty conduct of his God, he must needs proceed conquering, and to conquer. *My soul followeth hard after thee* (saith David) *thy right hand upholds me*, Psal. 63. 8. The Original is *נַפְשִׁי אַחֲרֶיךָ רָבַקָה*, *My soul cleaves after thee*: As if he had said, Go, lead on, my God; behold I follow as near, as close as I can, *ē vestigio*, I would not leave any distance, but pursue thy footsteps, step by step, leaning upon thine everlasting arms, that are underneath me, and following thy manuduction. Lot had almost perisht in Sodom, for lingring when his God hastned him away, Gen. 19. 16. But Sampson (till then invincible) awoke too late from the bolome of his *Dalilah*, Arrian in B. when the *Philistines* had shaved his seven locks: *And he thought to go out and shake off their cords wherewith they bound him, as at other times, but the Lord was departed from him, and they took him and put out both his eyes*, Judg. 16. 20, 21. A Christian is more then a man when he acts in concurrence with his God. Psal. 27. 1. *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear, the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?*

* ἀπλῶς μὴ δὲ ἀλλοθι καὶ ἂν δὲ δεῖς δόλου, καὶ τίς σε καλύψει, τίς ἀπογασσῇ ἢ πολλοὶ ἢ τὸν Δία ὁ δὲ τῶν ἐπὶ τοῦ ἔχου ἢ γεμῖνα ἢ τοῖς τε συντορεύουσιν, &c. πικτετ. l. 2.

c. 17.

afraid? But if he resists the Holy Ghost, he doth not only grieve him, but will if he go on resisting, quench him, and then he is all alone, and becomes heir to the curse of *Reuben*, *Gen.* 49. 3, 4. he who was a while since, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power, is now weak as water, and cannot excell.

The Proverb tells us *πρόμας ἐν καυρῷ χρῆναι*. There is a great deal of Time in a little opportunity. It is good striking while the Iron is hot, and lanching out while wind and tyde serve. Open all the Sails to every breath, and gale of Gods good Spirit. Welcome every suggestion, reverence every dictate, cherish every illapse of this blessed *Monitor*, let every inspiration find thee, as the Seal doth the Wax, or the spark the tinder, and then (as the Spouse tells her beloved) or ever thou art aware thy Soul will make thee as the Chariot of * *Aminadab*. Step into the pool when the Angel stirs the water, *Job.* 5. 4. Keep touch with the motions of the Spirit, and all is well.

* עמי נריב.
i. e. a free, and
willing people.

But if these three Rules are too general, and remote, I shall now lay down some more particular, and exact directions for checking the beginnings of sin, and these are of two sorts (as Physicians have their *Prophylactiques*, and their *Therapeutiques*.) Some for the prevention of the fit and paroxysm; others for the cure, and removal, when the symptoms of * are upon thee.

1. Before the Paroxysm cometh, prepare and antidote thy Soul against these lusts of the flesh, by observing these advices.

1 Rule.

The first is that notable counsel of *Eliphaz* to *Job*, cap. 22. v. 21. *Acquaint thy self now with God, and be at peace.* Get thy heart fixed where thy treasure is; have thy conversation in heaven, and thy fellowship with the father, and with his Son *Jesus Christ*: Flee to thy God to hide thee. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust, his truth shall be thy shield and buckler, *Psal.* 91. 1, 3, 4. Arise with thine arisen Lord, and seek the things that are above: Set thine affections there, where *Christ* sits at the right hand of God. If the Soul is not where it animates, but where it loves, awaken thine, and kindle it into holy passionate Extasies of love, that thou mayest live in heaven all day long, and (which is the priviledge of the upright, *Psal.* 140. 13.) dwell in the presence of that God whom thy soul delighteth in. The Tempter cannot reach thee there.

Be much in converse with God, and the Devil will have little converse with thee; or if he have, it will be to little purpose. How was the

the Majesty of King *Abasuerus* incensed at that affront of *Haman*, when he threw himself upon Queen *Esters* bed---*What will he force the Queen in our presence ? Esth. 7. 8.* Keep but in the presence of thy Lord, thy King, thy Husband, and the Ravisher will not offer to force thee there, or if he do, it will be but in vain. How secure is that Soul that lives under the deep, and warm, and constant sense of Gods being its *all in all* ? What a munition of rocks is this against all assaults and incursions of the Tempter ? They are our tame and common Poultry, whose wings sweep the ground as they flye, and raise a dust : but the generous Eagle soon mounts above this smoaky lower Region of the Air, till she makes the clouds a pillow for her head. Put on, Christian, thy Eagles wings (which are the same with those Doves wings which *David* prays for, *Psal. 55. 6.*) and flee away, that thou mayst be at rest. They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, &c. *Isa. 40. 31.* When the soul is once but upon the wing heaven-ward, O how easily then doth it soar away above this Region of smook and dust, above this Atmosphere of carnality, and fleshly lustings, into the pure and free *Æthereal* air, the blessed serenity and rest of Gods life and kingdom, which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, *Rom. 14. 17.* It is cold iron that shews it rusty scales, they disappear when it is red hot. Get but thine heart on fire heaven-ward, be but ascending thither *Eliab*-like, in a flaming Chariot of holy longings and pantings after God, and the lustings of the flesh shall no more appear to deform thy beauty, then the rust of Iron appears, when the metal is Candent, i. e. all over of a light and glowing ardour. The Rule then is, Be sick of love to thy dear Master, and Lord, and thou shalt not be sick of sin. Stir up spiritual and holy lustings in thy soul after the love and favour, the grace and image of thy God, and thou shalt not fulfil the lustings of the flesh.

Study, throughly the unchangeable natures, the eternal laws and differences of moral good and evil. To open this ; there are some things of a middle and indifferent nature, neither good nor evil in themselves : But if God commands or forbids any of these, they are then good or evil indeed, but only because or whilst he doth so. The Ceremonial Law of the Old Testament stood in these things, and is now abolished by the same Divine authority which enacted it. And it is now the glory of Christian Religion, that (excepting the two Sacraments, and a very few other positive institutions for great and weighty causes reserved the Evangelical Law of the New Testament consists of such precepts as

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carry

carry their own *Credential letters*, and are built upon moral grounds of everlasting equity and righteousness. Wherefore the *Romanists* deserve very ill of Christian Religion; nor are the *Lutheran Churches* to be excused, who of their own heads impose so many indifferent things now in the service of God under the Gospel, and that for no other reason, but because they will; consequently rendring that yoke a *hard one* which Christ left *easy*, and that burthen a *heavy one*, which he would have *light*.

But now moral Good and Evil are not only such because God commands the one, and forbids the other, but because the things themselves are so, essentially and unalterably. As *Mathematical* truths and Proportions are not such because God would have them so, but because the nature of the things cannot be otherwise. Almighty power it self (reverently be it spoken) cannot make two *parallel lines* or *surfaces* meet, though extended infinitely; or the three *Angles* of any *straight-lined Triangle*, amount to any less or more than *two right Angles* in *Geometry*; or in *Arithmetick*, alter the proportions between *two and four*, to any other than that of *double* and half, or between *three and nine*, than that of a root and square; or (to name no more) is it possible that a *Seventh* in *Musique* should ever become a *Concord*, or a *Unison*, fifth, or eighth, a *Discord*: for these things are in their very nature fixed, and unchangeable, they must be what they are, or not be at all. Thus there is an eternal reason, why that which is *good* should be so, and commanded; and why that which is evil should be so, and forbidden, which depends not so much on Gods *will*, as on his *nature*. For if God could will, that *good* should be *evil*, and *evil good*, he could deny himself, and change his own unchangeable *Divinity*, which is impossible: And therefore I look upon that opinion of a modern * Dutch Author (though I would be so charitable, as to believe he knew not, and therefore meant not what he said) as overthrowing all Religion: The thing is this, That God may if he please, out of the vast Sovereignty of his Will, command all that wickedness which he hath forbidden, and make it our duty; also forbid all that holiness which he hath commanded, and make it become sin to us.

For my part, I would choose rather to be an Atheist, than to believe there is such a *God* as *this* in the world. But I am sure the *holy One* of *Israel* cannot do so, not through any defect, but through infinite plenitude and redundancy of all perfection. *Ex. Gr.* There is an eternal fitness and comeliness that a reasonable creature should love, and honour, and obey its Creator, and contrarily an eternal horridness, and

and indecency, that an immortal soul should forget, contemn, and affront the Father of spirits. Now to affirm that God can dispence with the former, nay, make our fear of him, or delight in him to be a sin, and punish it with everlasting torments; and to affirm that God can wink at, or allow the latter, much less command Atheism, Blasphemy, Pride, Unthankfulness, &c. or make Hypocrisy, Covetousness, Revenge, Sensuality, to become duties and graces, and reward them with everlasting happiness, this were to utter the most hellish blasphemy, and the most impossible contradictions in the world. The heathen Plato (in those divine discourses of his, his *Eutyphro*, and *Theætetus*, and otherwhere) may well rebuke the madness of such Christians, as this bold and vain speculator. The sum of this Rule then is; Deeply possess and dye thy soul all over with the representation of that everlasting beauty and amiableness that is in holiness, and of that horror and ugliness, and deformity that eternally dwells on the forehead of all iniquity. Be under the awe and majesty of such clear convictions all day long, and *thou shalt not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*. For the mind of man is wont to conceive, before its own apprehensions and Ideas of good and evil, as *Jacobs* sheep did before the Rods in the Gutter. If thy notions of good and evil be right and clear, thy lustings and desires will be from evil towards good, all the conceptions of thy soul and their births will be fair and unspotted. But if thy apprehensions be speckled, confused, and ring-straked (like his Rods) the conceptions of the mind, thy lustings, will be so too, so great a truth is that *πᾶς μοχθηρὸς ἀγνοεῖ*, that dark ignorance and folly lies at the bottom, as the root and foundation all wickedness, * every immoral man is a fool, even when he commits a known sin, yet then he may be said not to know what he doth, *Luk. 23.34* All the Reason in the world takes the part of holiness, and sin hath not one jot of true Reason to plead, or alledg in its own behalf.

Σὺ δὲ ἀνιδεύων ἐν τοῖς ὁσίοις ἀνάσσεις λαοθάλασσι. τῷ ἰσχυρῷ ὁμοιωμένοι διὰ τὰς ἀδίκους πράξεις, τῷ δὲ ἀνομοιωμένοι ὅτι ὁρῶντες ἐν τῷ ὕμνῳ, ζῶντες δὲ τὸν εἰκότα βίον ἀδμοιοῦνται, δίκην τίνουσι, &c. Plato in *Theæteto*.

Understand thy self, be no stranger to thy own breast, know the Rule 3. frame, and temper, and constitution of thy mind. *The wise mans eyes are in his head, but the fool walketh in darkness*, *Eccles. 2. 14*. It is a true and sober maxim of the Platonist, *ἵψ' ὅσον σαυτὸν ἀγνοεῖς, ὅμιζο μάλιστα*, as far as a man is ignorant of himself, so far forth he is to reckon himself guilty of madness and distraction. The Satyrist complains of

* Παράλογον
ματὸν ἐν τῷ
ὄντι ἰσῶτον,
ὡς θεῶν, ἐν
δαίμονι τῷ
τῷ δὲ ἀδίκῳ
ἀδμοιοῦνται

Demophil. in
Ἰννοκ.

Juvenal.

this — *Ut nemo in sese tentat descendere, nemo.* Dare to unlock thy bosom, to ransack every corner of thy heart, let thy Spirit accomplish a diligent search. Feel the pulse of thy soul, visit it often, ask it how it doth. Surveigh thy self, and blush to leave any *terra incognita*, any region of thy mind undiscovered. God hath charged and entrusted every man with his own soul, and what folly is it *ἀλλοτρίστησιν* to be busie in what doth not concern thee, and neglect what chiefly doth so, the affairs of thy own mind? Is any thing nearer thee, or of such consequence to thee as thy self? O let thy charity then begin at home. Thou owest this duty to thy self, to take an exact account daily of the posture, and order of thy inward man. With how great confusion doth the Spouse acknowledg this neglect, *Cant. 1. 6. They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept.* If ever thou wouldst be dextrous in suppressing the first risings of sin, enquire, what advantages the tempter hath against thee? where that *nescio quid tenerum & molle*, lieth in thy soul (as *Cicero* calls it) against which temptation plants its chiefest battery, and artillery? what thine own iniquity is, *Psal. 18. 23.* which is that *ἀνέλκυστος & ἀμαρτία*, the sin that doth so easily beset thee, *Heb. 12. 1.* See what grace is principally wanting in thee, which is weakest? in what instances thy greatest *faileur* betrays it self, in which of thy passions and affections thou art most *peccable*, and what lustings of the flesh they are, which give thee the frequentest *Alarms*, and threaten the greatest dangers? be making these researches and explorations daily, compare thy heart with the Law of the eternal God, and with the dictates and maxims of thine own conscience. See, where thy greatest discrepancy, and non-conformity to these from time to time ariseth, and this (like *Pathology* or understanding the disease, and the constitution of the patient) will hugely minister and conduce to the exact method of *Phylick*, either for prevention, or for cure.

Rule 4.

Get and keep a tender Conscience. Be sensible of the least sin. As the apple of the eye (the fittest Emblem, in the world, of a tender conscience) is not only offended, with a blow or wound, but if so much as a little dust or sinoak get in, it weeps them out. Some mens consciences are, like the stomach of the Ostrich that digesteth iron, they can swallow and concoct the most notorious sins, swearing, drunkenness, &c. without regret, *their consciences are seared as with an hot iron*, as the Apostle phraseth it, *1 Tim. 4. 2.* they have so injured their souls to the grossest wickedness, as the *Phylis*, a people of *Africa*, whom *Plutarch* mentions, had their bodies to the eating poyson, that it becomes

as it were natural. But a good conscience hath a delicate sense, it is the most tender thing in the whole world, it feels the least touch of known sin, and grieves at the grieving of Gods good Spirit, not only for *quenching*, or *resisting*, or *rebelling against the Holy Ghost*, but even for grieving the holy Spirit of promise, whereby it is sealed to the day of redemption, *Eph. 4. 30.* The most tender hearted Christian, he is the stoutest and most valiant Christian. Happy is the man that fears always, but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief, *Prov. 28. 14.* It is the true magnanimity, and heroick courage in our spiritual warfare to tremble at the least iniquity. A Christian is never fitter to endure hardness as a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ, than when his conscience is most tender. To be such a coward as not to dare to break any one of Gods Commandments, is to be the valiantest person in the world, for such a one will chuse the greatest evil of suffering, before the least of sinning; and however the jeering Ishmaels of the world be ready to reproach, and laugh one to scorn, for this niceness, and precise scrupulosity (as they term it), yet the choice (if God be but wiser than vain man) is a very wise one.

Keep an exact guard upon thy heart, *Prov. 4. 23.* let the eyes of thy soul be open and awake, upon all the stirrings of thy thoughts and affections. Bid them stand at their first appearance. As soon as ever thou descriest any of them in motion, summon them before thy souls tribunal: let them not pass till thou knowest perfectly, whence they come, whither they go. Ask their errand:

State viri; que causa via? quive estis in armis? Virg.

Is it grief, or is it joy, or hope, or fear, or love, &c. that is now upon the march? Demand the Word of it, ask whether it hath a Pass from God, and Conscience; Catechise it, examine it, search it; speak to it in the Centinel's and Watchman's phrase, *Indica tu adituata.* shew me your Ticket. Tell me my desire, my love, my fear, my anger by whose authority art thou now up, and in motion? if they are able to produce a good warrant, from Gods Commandments, or from the dictate of reason, and conscience, let them go on in Gods name; they are about their business. But if they cannot, arrest them as idle vagrants, nay as enemies to thy souls peace, and charge them upon their allegiance to their superiours, that they stir no further.

Be daily training and exercising all thy graces. Have them always in battel-array, be in a military posture, both defensive and offensive. Stand constantly to thine arms, for thou hast to do with two enemies that.

Rule 6.

that will never give thee any *truce*, or respite, the *מלחמה* and the *מלחמה* (as the *Jews* call them) the flesh within thee, *Jer.* 17. 9. and the *Tempter*, that destroying Angel of the bottomless pit, without thee, *1 Pet.* 5. 8. the Christian warfare is *πλεγματισμός*, a war never to be altered, it admits of no peace, no cessation. The Soldier of Christ must never lay down his arms, but expect to be upon continual duty, and travel, till the great Lord of Hosts, under whose banner he now fighteth, is pleased to remove his Quarters from that Army Militant here on Earth, to that blessed and Triumphant in the Heavens.

Rule 7.

Be well skilled in the *Elenchs* of Temptation. I mean, in unmasking the Sophistry and Mystery of iniquity, in defeating the *Wiles*, and Stratagems of the Tempter, and in detecting, and frustrating the cheats and finenesses of the flesh with its deceitful lusts, *Ephes.* 4. 22. *2 Cor.* 2. 11. No small part of spiritual wisdom lies in the blessed art of discovering and refuting sins fallacies and impostures. If ever thou wouldst prove famous, and victorious, and worthy honour and reverence in thy spiritual warfare, be well seen in the skill of fencing, know all thy wards for every attack. Provide thy self with answers and retorts beforehand, against the subtil insinuations, and delusions of thine enemy, *Ex.gr.* If Satan tells thee (as he often will) that the sin is pleasant, *ask whether the gripings of conscience be so too, whether it be such a pleasant thing to be in hell, to be under the wrath of an Almighty Judge. If he tells thee, no body sees, thou mayst commit it safely; ask whether he can put out Gods all-seeing eye, whether he can find a place empty of the divine presence for thee to sin in, or whether he can blot out the *Items* out of the Book of Gods Remembrance. If he tells thee it is a little one, ask whether the Majesty of the great *Jehovah*, be a little one, whether there be a little hell, or no. If he talks of profits and earthly advantages that will accrue, ask what account it will turn to at the last day, and what profit there is, if one should gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what one should give in exchange for his soul. When sin, like *Jael*, invites thee into her Tent, with the *lure* and *decoy* of a Lordly treatment, think of the nail and hammer which fastned *Sisera* dead to the ground. Be not caught with chaff, lay by thee such *memoires*, such answers and *reparties* as these, wherewith thou mayst reply upon the Tempter: that the God of truth hath other manner of *pleasures*, *profits*, *honours* to court thy love, and reward thy service with, than the father of lies, *viz.* true and real, solid and eternal ones; what are the pleasures, that are

*Τίς σε πολυ-
πλανήσων ἐν τῇ
οὐκ ἰδιδάξῃ
καὶ δὲ θεῷ,
Μηδ.

Mat. 16. 26.

Judg. 4. 18, 21

& 5. 25, 26.

in

in sin for a season, to be compared with the rivers of Gods pleasure, that are for evermore at his right hand? And what is a little wealth, that thieves can steal, a despicable heap of riches, which like a flock of birds a lighting a little while in thy yard, will take wing presently and fly away, to be named, with the unsearchable riches of Christ, or that inheritance of the Saints in light? Or what is the painted bubble, the fading, though beauteous Rainbow, of earthly honour and grandeur, to a weight of glory, to an incorruptible crown of righteousness, that fadeth not away; to a Kingdom, which it is the Fathers good pleasure to reserve in the highest heavens for every theep, and every lamb of his little flock, and (to name these Considerations by cluster) remember, that the greatest wisdom is to do, not what in some poor few regards is, but what is absolutely lovely and desirable; that what is best of all, is best for thee to love, and mind, and prosecute; that a good conscience is a continual feast, that God alone is enough, and without him, nothing for thy happiness: that thy soul is worthier thy care, than thy carcase, and the life to come, than this; that eternity is more valuable than time; that not the opinions of men lulled asleep in voluptuousness and sensuality, but Gods estimate, but the sentiments of the holiest, best, and wisest men; or (if you needs will) of the worst and vilest, when conscience is awakened, when they come to lye a dying, and when they shall stand before God at the last day, are to be preferred as the wisest. That everlasting happiness cannot be bought too dear, but repentance and shame may easily. That the hardest *doings* or *sufferings* for Christ, are infinitely easier than everlasting misery. That heaven, and glory, will more than recompence all thy self-denials, and mortifications, all thy watchings, fastings, &c. and in the mean time, the very hope of it, besides the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and his love and grace, and the comforts of his Spirit, will certainly sweeten all the tediousness of thy way to heaven, with inexpressible redundancy of satisfaction, yea, sometimes with joy unutterable and full of glory. In sum, that God is a good Master, and his service perfect freedom, for besides the glorious recompence to come; thy work, Christian, is even now its own reward. If thou believest strongly such Aphorisms as these (and he is madder than any in *Bedlam* that doth not believe them) it will be no hard matter, by Gods blessing and assistance, in their strength *to put to flight the armies of the aliens*, at least to shield thy self against the volleys of fiery darts, which at any time the Tempter shall pour upon thee.

Withdraw thy self, if possible, from the occasions of sin. It is good Rule 8.
standing.

Psal. 73. 2.

standing out of harms way: do not gaze upon temptations, but pray with David, Lord turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, Psalm 119. 37. If thou perceivest thy feet are almost gone, thy steps bad well nigh slip, it is surely high time for thee if thou canst to run away; nor will it be reckoned thy cowardize, but thy valour in the day of thine account, thus to retreat from the enemy. It is a very wise mans counsel concerning the haunts and convertles of the profane, Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men, avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away, Prov. 4. 14, 15. again concerning the strange woman, Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house, chap. 5. 8. And again concerning occasions of intemperance, be not among wine bibbers, amongst riotous eaters of flesh, chap. 23. 20, and ver. 31. Look not on the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth it self aright, i.e. when it sparkles and vapours in the glass, when it laughs in thy face, and invites thy lip, then shut thy eyes, lest sin steal in upon thee. Do not imitate the silly Lark which by the pleasing contemplation of the little piece of glass, that glitters in the Sun, while the Fowler twirls it about, is enticed nearer and nearer, forgetting or overseeing the net, which ere long overwhelms it. Vouchsafe not to admit the Tempter to a Part, the Poets fable *Ulysses* to have stopt his ears at the enchanting voices of the *Syrins*. Be thou as the deaf Adder to that great Charmer: the best entertainment thou canst give him, is—Get thee behind me Satan.

Rule 9.

Bind thy self beforehand with the severest of thy resolutions, not to trust thy own judgment, when the Temptation begins to get within thee: a man in passion is not himself, *Perit judicium cum res transit in affectum*. One dis tempered with the *morbis arcuatus*, the Jaundise, black or yellow, is apt to impute the colour his eye is vitiated with, to every object; who would trust such a judge of colours? or the palate of one in a Fever, to distinguish of Taltes? It is a good rule under the disorder of temptation, *non nos amittit*, never credit thy own apprehensions at such a time. If thou takest thy self yielding in the least, start back with abhorrence, and chide thy rashness, appealing from thy present distracted, to thy ancient and wiser self; from thy self asleep and disorderd, to thy self awake and sober, at other times. *Jonah's* judgement was weak and childish (though a Prophet) when he was under that temptation of impatient anger, *Jon. 4. 9.* I do well to be angry, a saucy and bold answer to his God! he should not have trusted his present sentiments, for he was not himself. As one that bespeaks

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an awakening, will over night desire his friend not to give ear to him, though (saith he) I plead earnestly to sleep a little longer, yet do not regard that, for I tell you of it before on purpose, and I shall thank you when once I am up, for not letting me have my will. Thus tell thy self beforehand, that though under a drowiness, and slumber of spirit, thou art ready to plead for the flesh, and to feel some inclinations to fulfil its lusts, and art very loth to let them go unsatisfied, yet, if thou art but resolute, not to comply with thy own foolish and unreasonable desires, thou wilt heartily thank thy self; I mean, be entirely glad, when thy eyes are open, that thou hast overcome thy self, and that Wisdom and Reason, and Conscience have got the day. Resolve to remember this when temptation comes the next time to assault thee, and play the man.

Having laid down these directions, by way of prevention against the time of conflict, to prepare the soul beforehand, that in the assault it may not be vanquished, I come now to the Christians behaviour in the fit, and *paroxysm* it self, when the lusts of the flesh are stirring. And the great Rule to be observed here, is this:

As soon as ever thou perceivest thine affections, and lusts begin to grow inordinate, and thy inferior appetites to rebel, take thy self to task forthwith, and resist them with all thy might. Do not stay a moment, delay is unutterably dangerous: who but a mad man that sees the Stable or Barn hard by his dwelling house just beginning to catch fire, would stand still, and say, let it alone a little, I would see what would come of it; two or three minutes indulgence to the flame will embolden it without expecting his leave or permission any longer, to devour, and rage, and consume; and carry all before it in despite of his mightiest resistances; when a little at first might have saved that vast damage, which his folly and loytering hath occasioned. How contemptible were those fires at first, that in few hours have triumpht over stately Palaces, and turn'd sometimes vast Cities into heaps of dust and ashes? How small an infirmity, and distemper neglected, hath ushered in the most fatal sickness? And how often hath a trifling bruise or strain, been preface to a *Gangrene*, and the prick of a pin or thorn, not lookt after time enough, enforced the cutting off a leg, or arm, nay, proved mortal, and incurable? Advantages to good, like *Arithmetical progressions*, rise slowly, in fair and even intervals, but advantages to ill, like *Geometrical*, grow up presently from little to vast excesses.

— *Facilis descensus Averni:*

Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,

Hic labor, &c. Virg. Æn. 6.

P

Motion

Galileo, & after him *Gassendus*, and others have demonstrated, that heavy bodies in their descent, do in equal times transmit unequal spaces, continually increasing according to

the progression of *odd numbers*, *Ex. gr.* if in one pulse, a Bullet fall perpendicularly, one inch, in the next, it will three inches, in the 3d. 5. in the 4th 7, &c. till the swiftness grow immense and unutterable.

Motion to ill is downwards, and like the descent of heavy bodies, collects a new *Impetus*, and moveth every step, with a swiftness perpetually increasing, and (if not stopp'd early) soon irresistible. Mischief springs apace, grows tall and large, and adult suddenly, as *Jonah's gourd* did, in a night. Our passage in sin is with wind and tide increasing; but in holiness, with both against us. To seek the things above is a supernatural motion, and therefore difficult, but the contrary, is natural and therefore easie, *ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τὸ κατὰ φύσιν, τὸ δὲ βίον ἀνθρώπου*, as the Philosopher well determines. Evil is now akin to us since our degeneracy, and hath vast advantages on its side, if once it gets an allowed harbour, and entertainment in our breast.

The Enquiry then before us, is, by what Methods a Christian ought to address himself to battel, in this spiritual warfare, how he may so bid defiance to his enemies, as to daunt and vanquish them. Let these Rules therefore be observed for resisting and quelling thy lusts, and inordinate affections in their first sallies, and in the commencement of the insurrection.

Rule 1.

Awe them with the authority of thy Reason, and understanding; it is infinitely unbecoming a man, that his lower appetites should grow mutinous and untractable, that the *τὸ ἀλογον ἢ ψυχῆς ἢ σωματικῆς*, the inferiour and brutish faculties of our souls, should rebel against the *τὸ ὑπερνοῦν*, that sovereign faculty of Reason; the Scythians are reported, when their slaves took arms, to have dasht the sacking rebels presently out of countenance, by shewing their whips, that well-known weapon. How soon doth the presence of a grave Magistrate allay a popular tumult if he comes in soon enough, in the beginning of the Riot.

Ille regis dictis animos, & pectora mulcet. Virg. *Æn.* 1.

God hath made Reason the Magistrate of the little World, he hath given it a Commission to keep the peace, in our souls. And so far as our minds are illustrated, and governed by right reason, so far do they partake of the image of God, of whose glorious mind one of the best and clearest conceptions we can have, is, that it is *infinite and eternal Reason*. Do thy passions begin to rise in arms? do they grow disorderd

dered and unruly? Let thy *reason* come out to them, and ask whether they know their *Master*? And let thy soul blush, with infinite scorn, that ever these base slaves should usurp the throne of their *rightful Lord*, and unman thee, by deposing *Reason*, which is all thou hast to shew that thou art not a beast. What an extream silly thing is a man in passion? Nothing can be more ridiculous and contemptible. Out of love and pity to thy self, O man, do not affront and disgrace thine immortal soul any more, by suffering any malepart and sawcy passion to outrage and asflandiate thy Reason. That was a generous Rule of Pythagoras—*πάσαν δὲ μάλιστα δειχέσθαι σεαυτὸν*. Let a man use great reverence and manners to himself. Be ashamed (friend) to do any vile or dishonest action before thy self; though no body be conscious, yet thy soul is, and thou canst not run away from that. What good will it do thee to contradict the dictates of thine own mind? Is it possible for thee to be at peace, when thouallest out with thy self? Thou justifiest all the injuries in the world that others do thee, for thou dost thy self daily injuries ten millions of times greater, than the greatest others can do to thee. Whoever thou art that despisest thy own Reason, and permittest every silly lust to abuse thee, by scorning *that*; thou art a false Traytor to thy own soul. There are but a very few men that are in their wits, the far greatest part of mankind, in the greatest matters, in the highest concerns of a *man*, are besides themselves; for a mans owns self must be a *reasonable creature*; and therefore not to govern ones own mind and affections by Reason, is to be mad and distracted; if he that looks not to his Family is worse than an Infidel, what then is he that looks not to his *mind*? what confused *Chaos* are most mens minds,——*rudis indigestaque moles*? A man makes a Ovid. fool of himself as oft as he prefers his passion before his reason; the Philosopher gives us the sum of this Rule excellently, *μὴ ἀλογίζεαι σεαυτὸν* Carm. Pytha. *ἔχειν δὲ μὴδὲ ἰδεῖν*. Accustom thy self to act every where like a *reasonable creature*.

If thy distempered affections, and lusts, slight the authority of thy Reason, as thou art a man; bid thy conscience do its office, as thou art a Christian. Try to awe them with Gods written word, thus our Saviour thrice repuls'd the Tempter, *Mat. 4. 4, 6, 10.* by producing Scripture to confront him, *It is written*, &c. Ask thy heart if it knows that hand, whether it dares rebel against the express Commands, Statutes, and Ordinances of the living God. Bring out of the Register of conscience, the Laws of him that made thee, oppose some clear text of holy Writ, that comes into thy mind, against that very lust that is now

rising Ex. Gr. If it be carnal fear, *Isa.* 51. 12. If love of the world, *1 Job.* 2. 15. If revenge, *Rom.* 12. 19. If impatience under affliction, *Jam.* 1. 12. If diffidence in Gods promises, *Numb.* 23. 19. If immoderate anger, *Ephes.* 4. 26. If pride and arrogance, and self-assuming, *Mat.* 5. 3. & 11. 29, &c. *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of such artillery!* whose conscience is rich in these Memoirs! Store thy mind with this sacred treasure, that as a Scribe instructed for the Kingdom of heaven, thou mayst (upon all occasions) bring forth out of thy treasure things new and old. Hold such Scriptures as are point-blank contrary to the Temptation, before thy conscience; if it would turn away, compel it to look upon them, and think, I am Gods creature, I must obey him, Did ever any rebel against him and prosper, *Eine ego. ut adverser?* Is it wisely done of me, to resist my Maker? to try which is strongest, a poor worm, or the Almighty God? And if the love of Gods Commands will not constrain thee, let the terrors, the thunders, and lightnings of his Threats perswade thee, which are all levelled against wilful sinners. And it is not safe standing (surely) in the very Canons mouth. Peruse those two Scriptures, and tremble to venture on any known breach of the Law of thy God, *Deut.* 28 58. & *Isa.* 45. 9.

Mat. 13. 52.

Terence.

Rule 3.

If all this effect nothing, then draw the Curtain, take off the vail from before thy heart, and let it behold the God that searcheth it, *Jer.* 17. 10. *Heb.* 4. 13. Shew it the Majesty of the Lord, see how that is described, *Isa.* 6. 1, 2, 3. Ask thy soul whether it sees the living God, that seeth it? Whether it is aware whose eye looks on, *Gen.* 16. 13, 14. Whether it hath no respect for God himself, who stands by, and whose pure and glorious eyes, *Hab.* 1. 13. pierce through and through thee. Tell thy heart again and again, that God will not be mocked; that *he is a God of knowledg, and by him actions are weighed;* that he is a jealous God too, and will by no means clear the guilty. Bid it consider well and look to it self, for God will bring to light every hidden thing of dishonesty; he that now sees, will judg it. Speak to thy unruly lusts as the Town-clerk of *Ephesus* wisely did to the mutinous Citizens, *Act.* 19. 40. *Sirs, we are in danger to be called in question for this days uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this tumult.*

1 Sam. 22 3.

Rule 4.

If these great real arguments be slighted, try whether an argument *ad hominem*, drawn from sense, will prevail. Awe thy lusts then with the bitterness of thine own experience. Consider how often thou hast rued their disorders; what dismal consequences have followed upon their

their transports, and how dearly thou hast paid heretofore for thy connivance at them. Bethink thy self on such a fashion as this. T'other day I was angry, and behaved my self uncomely, put the whole company, or family out of order, disoblige such a dear and faithful friend, by my rashness and folly, in uttering hasty words before I weighed them. O how did I repent me afterwards? How ashamed, and abashed, and confounded was I, when I came to my self? So at another time thus and thus I miscarried my self, and these are the fruits and cursed effects of my yielding to the beginnings of sin, and shall I go now and repeat my madness? Had I not smart enough for my folly before; but must I needs play the fool and the beast again? Ask thy self what thou ailest to forget all the sighs and groans, and bitter tears that thy lust hath already cost thee? and yet would the impudent sin be committed once more? *ut desipias in rebus tuis*: where are thy wits, man, if thou goest about it. *Sic notus Ulysses*? Was it so sweet a thing to lye under the horror and agony of a wounded conscience, and under Gods rebukes in secret the last time, that thou must needs venture again? Why, wilt thou hurt thy soul, and become a Devil to thy self? Why wilt thou needs break thy peace, by consenting to sin, and not only so, but torment thy self, and kindle a hell in thine own bosome? and all this in despite of all thy warnings? *Ille Piscator sapit*, the burnt Child dreads the fire: But it seems thou art in love with misery, and weary of thy joy and comfort. Thou hast a mind to be cursed, wretchedness and woe and death are it seemeth grown so amiable in thine eyes, as to become thy deliberate choice. Thus upbraid thy self, and do it so long and loud till thou fetchest thy soul again to it self, out of that swoon and lethargy which besotteth it. Give not over chiding and reproaching thy self, till thou makest thy heart sensible and considerate.

Labour to cure thy lustings and affections in the first beginning of Rule 5. their disorders, by Revulsion, by drawing the stream and tide another way. As Physitians stop an *Hæmorrhagie*, or bleeding at the Nose by breathing the *Basilique* vein in the arm, or opening the *Saphena* in the foot, so may we check our carnal affections, by turning them into spiritual ones, and those either,

1. Of the *famenature*, *Ex. gr.* Catch thy worldly sorrow at the rise, and turn thy mourning into godly sorrow. If thou must needs weep, weep for some-what that deserves it. Be the occasion of thy grief what it will, loss of estate, relations, &c. I am sure thy sins are a juster occasion, for they brought that occasion of mourning upon thee, be it what it will, that thou art now in tears for. Art thou troubled at any danger,

Theocritus in
Cyclops

full

full of fears, heart-aking, and confusion? O forget not the *Mother-civil* sin, let that have but its due share, and there will not be much left to spare of these affections for other things.

Is thy desire, thy love, thy joy too busie about some earthly trifle, some temporal good thing? Pray them to look up a little, and behold thy God, who is altogether lovely, in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore, Psalm. 16.11. and let everlasting shame stop thy mouth, if thou dardest affirm any thing in this wretched world worthy to be named once with the living God for Rivalship, and competition in thy heart, ^a sure I am he is the fountain and measure of all goodness. Let but the first and soveraign Good have its due of thy love and desire, thy delight and joy, and the remainder will be little enough for thy creature-comforts. Oh how great a folly is it to doat on husks, and over-look the bread in thy fathers house, Jer. 2.12, 13.

2. Turn thy carnal affections into spiritual ones of a contrary nature. *Ex. gr.* Allay thy worldly sorrow by spiritual joy. Try whether there be not enough in *All-sufficiency* it self, to compensate the loss of any outward enjoyment, whether there will be any great miss or want of a broken Cistern, when thou art at the fountain head of living waters, whether the light of the Sun cannot make amends for the expiring of a Candle. Chastise thy carnal fears by hope in God. Set on work the grace contrary to the lust that is stirring, if it be pride and vain-glory in the applause of men, think how ridiculous it were for a criminal to please himself in the esteem and honour his fellow-prisoners render him, forgetting how guilty he is before his Judge. If thou beginnest to be powred loosely out, and as it were dissolved in frolick mirth and jovialtie, correct that vainness and gayety of spirit by the grave and sober thoughts of death, and judgment, and eterniv.

Rule 6.

If this avail not, fall instantly to prayer, and indeed all along the whole encounter with thy lusts, *Pray continually*; lift up thy heart to God with sighs and groans unutterable: *Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down!* Tell him, thy lusts are his enemies, as well as thine; tell him they are too strong for thee; beg of him that he would interpose, and make bare his arm, and get himself a glorious name. *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient daies, in the generations of old. Art not thou it that bath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon?* Intreat him, of all love, to pity thee, even by his very bowels, and not to let the enemy triumph over thee. Tell him thou knowest

not

καὶ τὸν αὐ-
 τὸν μετεγεν-
 ἔασα καλὰ καὶ
 ἁγία καὶ σω-
 ζόμενα. καθο-
 ρισὼν δὲ τὸν
 λαόν. 7. δι-
 ἔσθαι καὶ δια-
 λυόμενα, καὶ
 φθινομενα.
 Max. Tyr.
 dissert. 1.

Ha. 51. 9.

not what to do, but thy eyes are towards him. Bemoan thy self before him, and plead his glory with him, and his truth and faithfulness. Spread his own gracious promises in his eyes, *Psal. 27. 14. Isa. 40. 28, 29, 30, 31. Psal. 55. 22. 1 Pet. 5. 7.*

Such Ejaculations or Meditations as these are mighty useful, Gods children find them so in the very paroxysme and assault. But if the Temptation continue, get into thy Closet, and humble thy self greatly before thy God, throw thy self at his feet, tell him thou wilt not rise till he hath given thee a token for good, no, thou art resolved there to lye hanging on him, and not to let him go untill he bless thee. O how welcome is every honest heart to the Father of Spirits, when it comes on such an errand, and in such a manner to the throne of grace! God cannot chuse but melt in pitty and tenderness over his poor desolate ones, when he sees the anguish of their souls. *How can I give thee up, O Jer. 31. 20. Ephraim? my bowels are troubled for thee, they will not give me leave to forget thee. Is Ephraim my dear son? I do earnestly remember him, I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. Give not over wrestling like Jacob, Gen. 32. 26, 27, 28. till thou risest Israel, one who hath power with God and prevaleth. And it is worth observing, that the Lord takes pleasure to be called the mighty God of Jacob, and the Lord God of Israel, as if he reckoned it an honour, that once the worm Jacob wrestled with his omnipotence, and overcame him, he seems to glory in his being conquered, and chuseth that for his name, and for his memorial throughout generations, which is an everlasting monument, that a poor frail man got the day of him. So much doth the effectual fervent prayer of the Righteous prevail.*

Perhaps sometime it may be requisite to joyn secret fasting with thy prayer. It maybe, the Devil that tempts thee is of that kind, that will not go out but by prayer and fasting, *Mat. 17. 21.* Thus Daniel lay prostrate at Gods feet, till a hand touched him, and set him upon his knees, and the voice said to him, *O Daniel greatly beloved, &c. Dan. 10. 2, 3,* compared with *10. 14.* and with *12. 19,* verses.

When thou hast done this, Rise up, and buckle on the shield of faith, *Rule 7th* which is able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, *Ephes. 6. 16.* Cloath thy soul with an heroick confidence, in the power and faithfulness of thy God, and in the name and majesty of the Lord of hosts, bid battel to thy lusts, and to all the powers of darkness. Take heed of going out in thy own single strength, for lust hath cast down many strong men wounded. *Prov. 7. 25.* While thou art keeping thine own heart with all diligence, forget not by faith to bring the great keeper of Israel.

Virg. *Æneid.*

Isa. 40. 11.

שׂרפּוֹן Serpens
hebr.

Use.

1. Informa-
tion.

Israel in. If any other man could have kept his own heart, sure the man after Gods own heart could have done it.———*Si Pergama dextrâ Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.* But the matter of Uriah and Bathsheba stands on record to all posterity to the contrary: For except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain, Psalm 127. 1. Do not venture to grapple with the roaring Lyon, but in the strength of the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah, who is also the Lamb of God, and the great shepherd of Israel, that carries his lambs in his bosom; and whither should the pursued Lamb betake it self, but into that shepherds arms? in time of trouble (spiritual as well as other) he will hide thee in the secret of his Tabernacle, in his pavilion will he hide thee, and set thee as upon a rock, Psal. 27. 5. He never fails the eyes of them that look up to him, nor makes his people ashamed of their hope. What time thou art afraid trust in him. His name is a strong tower, Cast thy care upon him, and expect the same pity from thy God, which the men of Jabesh Gilead found from Saul, when Nahash (the barbarous Ammonite) would have put out their right eyes, *To morrow ere the Sun be hot ye shall have help,* 1 Sam. 11. 9. If the King of Israels bowels yearned over those poor men, shall not the bowels of the God of Israel over those that fear him? Yes, upon his honour, truth, and faithfulness, he will not suffer that cruel Nahash (to allude to the signification of the word) that old Serpent, to have his will upon them: if he doth not come to day, he will to morrow ere the Sun be hot. *Lift up your heads therefore O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battel,* Psalm 24. 7, 8. Thus was Joseph rescued from the Archers that shot at him, and sorely grieved him. His bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the arms of the mighty God of Jacob, Gen. 49, 23, 24.

I come at length to the Use.

We are to learn hence, That our souls are not as they came out of the Father of Spirits hands, they appear as it were wrong risen in the world, and begin to tread awry the very first steps they measure on the stage of Earth. All the Symptoms of degeneracy are upon them. The best of men that ever yet blest the earth with their Residence upon it (except that Son of man who was only so by the mothers side, being by the Fathers the only begotten Son of the eternal God) had flesh lusting in them unto sin. Which is as convincing an Argument, that humane nature is blemished, and infected, that it hath received a *placua*, a stain

a stain and venome, as the *εκαδάματα* are of a pestilential disease, whose breakings out, display the contagion within. If the *Carbuncle* and the *Tokens* proclaim the *Plague*; or the spots discover a pestilential fever? or the *Variola* (those pestilulous efflorescencies, which we commonly name the *Small Pox*) argue the præcipation of the blood, by some latent malignity; certainly the lullings of the flesh in all men, demonstrate that the very nature of man on Earth is now blasted, and corrupted.

Methinks the *Divine perfection*, and *our own imperfection*, are the two greatest Sensibles in the world, both of them equally, that is, immensely clear, and discernable. For, the *former* is no less illustriously undeniable, then is the being, light, and beauty of the Sun in the Firmament at noon-day: And the *latter* is no less evident and conspicuous than the obscurity and horror of Midnight-darkness. Not to see the one is to be *ἀθεὶς* without God in the world, and not to feel the other (for it is like the Egyptian darkness, *Exod. 10. 21.* that may be felt by all that are not past feeling) is to be without or besides ones self.

Now since all the reason in the world consents to the truth of that Aphorism of the Philosopher, (*πᾶσι τῷ κόσμῳ κοινὴ φύσις*) that the best and most excellent mind is the parent of the Universe, and an Almighty everliving goodness is the Source, and root of all things, since heaven and earth say *Amen*, and again *Amen*, *Hallelujah* to that Oracle of the Psalmist, *The work of God is honourable and glorious*, *Psal. 111. 3.* And all that God made was very good, *Gen. 1. 31.* No wonder if it puzzled all Philosophy *οὐδὲν τὸ καλὸν*; Whence humane nature came to be thus vitiated and debauched? What are the fountains of this great Deep of sin within us, which like the troubled Sea, is perpetually thus casting out mire and dirt? Sure enough so universal an effect as this calamity of mankind, must have a cause as universal.

The *Socinians* here, and others, will have us believe that we all are born, as innocent as *Adam* in *Paradise*; that is (say they) in an *æquilibrium* and perfect indifferency to good and evil, assigning no other cause of the general corruption of mens lives and manners, but the infection of example, and evil custom, which is methinks as wise a guess, as to affirm the Wolf and Vulture to be bred and hatcht with as sweet and harmless a nature, as the innocent Lamb, or loving Turtle, but only the naughty behaviour, and ill example of their Ancestors, and companions, have debauched them into ravenousness, and ill manners.

The *Manichees* (as *St. Austin* tells us, who was himself for several years before his conversion of that heresie) thought that all the evil in the world sprang from an Almighty and an eternal principle of evil,

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Hierocles most
divinely con-
cludes,
*ἡ δὲ φύσις ἀλλὰ
πρόσκει τῆς
τῶν πᾶντων
ποίησιν, ὅ-
λογος αἰτία,
πλὴν τῆς κα-
κοίας ἀγαθό-
τητος, ἀγα-
θὸ γὰρ οὐ
οὐδὲ κακόν, ἀ-
γαθὸ δὲ ἡ-
δὲ καὶ ἡδ-
νός ἡδιστοῦ
ἰσχυρίζεται*
Carm. Pyth.
lib. 57. 20.

counter-working, and over-bearing God, whom they held the opposite eternal principle of goodness. But since the very formal notion of God, involveth infinite perfection, and that of sin, meer imperfection, it is a perfect contradiction, that evil should be infinite, if good be so; It were to make imperfection perfect, and meer impotency Omnipotent. Therefore there can be but one God, who is Almighty goodness. And as possible it is, that the Sun should darken the world by shining, as Almighty goodness should do any hurt in the world, or make any evil. God is the Author of all the good in the world, but sin and misery are of our making. *Hos. 13. 9.*

Much wiser than either of the two former, was the conjecture of the *Pythagoreans* and *Platonists*, though Heathens, who having nothing else to consult (as wanting the divine Revelation of holy Scripture) but their own faculties embraced the conceit, that all humane souls were created in the beginning *upright*, and placed by God in happier mansions, in purer and higher regions of the Universe, until at length they did, *ἀνθρώπων τὰς ψυχὰς ἀέρας τῶν δαιμόνων*, as *Hierocles* phraseth it, i. e. till they fell from the divine life, and became inhabitants of earthly Tabernacles, bringing their fallen and degenerate natures along with them. This opinion had of old the general consent of the *Jews*, as appeareth, *Joh. 9. 2.* and yet hath, as *Mex. Ben Israel* in his Book *De Resurrectione mortuorum*, witnesseth. Among the Christians *Origen* is in the number of its Sectaries, in his books *de principiis*, and some few of the Ancients.

But as much as is necessary for us to know about this great Enquiry, God hath (blessed be his goodness) sufficiently revealed in the three first Chapters of *Genesis*, compared with *Psal. 51. 5. Eccles. 7. 29. Rom. 12. 3. &c.* And he is as wise as he need be in so great a point, that knows how to understand these Scriptures according to the Analogy of Faith, and consistency with the divine perfections, and that so believeth them, as to put that and no other sense and interpretation upon them, which is worthy of the glorious attributes, and excellent Majesty of the living God: Although some difficulties will remain perhaps insuperable to us, in this our present estate on earth.

I have already in some measure discovered the Mysteries, and secrets of this blessed art of checking sin in the beginnings of it. Let me now persuade the practise of these holy Rules, let us resolve in the strength of Christ to resist these lustings of the flesh. Take the exhortation of the Apostle, *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit your selves like men,* *1 Cor. 16. 13.*

Use 2.
Exhortat.

Ἄνθρωποι ἵνα
φίλοι μνησ-
θε δὲ θυρί-
δος ἀλλήνων.
Hom.

Let

Let me press this with a few considerations.

1. The more thou yieldest, the more thou mayest. Sin is unsatiable, it will never say it is enough. Give it an inch, it will take an ell: See the sad example of Peter denying his Lord, *Mat. 26. 1.* He was only timorous, he follows afar off, *v. 58.* 2. At the next step he denies his Lord openly before them all, *v. 70.* 3. He adds an oath to it, *v. 72.* And lastly, *v. 74.* he falls a cursing and swearing, as if he meant to out-sin the vilest there. It is no wisdom to try conclusions between fire and Gunpowder in the heap. Who but a fool would unlock the door of his house, when it is beset with Thieves, and excuse it, he did but turn the key, that was all. Why, he need do no more, to undo himself, they will easily do all the rest.

2. It is the quarrel of the Lord of Hosts, in which thou fightest, let thy courage rise in proportion to the goodness of thy cause, and the honour of that great Prince and Captain under whose banner thou servest. Upon thy good behaviour and address in Arms, depends much of the renown and honour of Christianity. A cowardly Soldier is the reproach of his Commanders. Thou hast a noble General, O Christian, that hath done, and finished perfectly whatever concerns thy Redemption from the powers of darknes. *To him that overcometh will be give to sit on his throne, even as he overcame, and is set down on his fathers throne, Rev. 3. 23.* Do valiantly and worthily. Follow thy victorious Leader, let all that know thee, see that Religion is no mean and feeble thing; that the School of Christ breeds the excellent of the earth, that the Divine life is the most powerful principle in the World, that the Spirit of God in thee, and his grace, is stronger than all thy lusts and corruptions. Not he that talks most, or professeth most, but he that acts and lives most as a Christian, shall be the man whom the King delights to honour.

3. The lusts of the flesh are thy greatest enemies, as well as Gods, they war against thy soul, *1 Pet. 2. 11.* To resist them feebly, is to do, not only the work of the Lord, but of thy Soul negligently.

4. It is easie vanquishing at first in comparison. A fire newly kindled is soon quenched, and a young thorn or bramble easily pulled up. The fierce Lyon may be tamed, when a whelp: but if thou stay a little, there will be no dealing with a Lust any more, than with a savage Beast of prey. Grace will lose, and corruption get strength continually by delaying.

5. If thou resistest, the victory is thine, *James 4. 7.* And in my Text, *Walke, &c. and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.* Thou canst never be conquered, if thou wilt not yield. Stand but to it, and thou art invincible, while thou art unwilling, all the Devils in hell cannot

force thee to sin. Temptation puts on its strength, as the will is. Cease but to love the sin, and the temptation is answered. Indeed, if thou chusest to be a slave, thou shalt be one. Nothing but thy own choice can undo thee.

Sixthly, Consider what thou dost, if thou fulfillst the lusts of the flesh, thou provokest thy heavenly Father, rebellest against him, and *Rebellion is as witchcraft, and stubbornness as Idolatry.* Thou crucifiest *Jesus Christ afresh, and punitest him to open shame.* Is this thy love, and thanks to thy Lord, to whom thou art so infinitely beholding? Canst thou find in thy heart to put thy Spear again in his side? Hath he not suffered yet enough? Is his bloody passion nothing? Must he bleed again? Ah monster of ingratitude! Ah perfidious Traytor as thou art, thus to requite thy Master! *Again*, thou grieveest thy Comforter, and is that wisely done? Who shall comfort thee, if he depart from thee grieved? Or is it ingenuous, thus unworthily to treat that noble Guest, to affront Gods sacred Spirit to his very face? and in despight and mockery of him, to side with his Enemy, the Flesh? Is this thy kindness to thy best Friend, thy faithful Counsellor, thy infallible Guide, thy Minister, and Oracle, thy sweet and only Comforter? What need I add, that thou breakest thy peace, woundest thy conscience, forfeitest the loss of Gods countenance, and makest a gap in the divine protection for all evil to rush in at.

7ly. And lastly, Consider the invaluable benefit of resisting, of not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, in two great Instances.

First, Unutterable joy and pleasure will be shed abroad in thy Soul, as often as thou gettest the day. I know no greater triumph than that of a Christian, when *he is more than conqueror through Christ that loves him.* O the peace, the joy, and holy glorying in the Lord, and in the power of his might, that a good man is even ravishd, and caught up into the third Heavens with, when the Lord covers his head in the day of Battel, and lifts it up above his spiritual enemies. To vanquish ones self, is a nobler exploit than to subdue a City, *Prov. 16. 32.* Nay, a vaster Conquest, then if one could, with that great Macedonian Captain, achieve the empty title of the Vanquisher of the world.

2. Every Conquest will encrease thy strength and dexterity against the next assault: So that when the vanquishd lust recruits its forces, thou wilt be able to outvie thy self, and become more dextrous every time.

Nay, the mortifying of one earthly member (like the cutting off a limb from the natural body) will make the whole body of sin tremble, all the rest of thy Lusts will fare the worse, and by consent languish. So that every victory over any one corruption, weakens that, and all the rest, and breaks the way for future Conquests.

How

How Ministers or Christian Friends may,
and ought to apply themselves to Sick
Persons, for their good, and the discharge
of their own Conscience?

Job 33. 23, 24.

If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness; then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom.

THese words are part of *Elihu's* discourse uttered by way of Reprehension and Conviction to *Job*, and by way of Vindication and Apology for God in his dealings with men; and although he premiseth this, that God giveth no account of his matters, ver. 13. yet he doth *ex abundanti*, give an account for God, and makes a defence, or gives a rationale of Gods proceedings with men, &c. where he shews that it is not mans torment or ruin that God desires, but his reformation and amendment: And that it may appear how sincerely and fervently he desires it, he shews that there are several ways and means which God useth, which are most powerful and likely to produce it.

1. He speaks to men in dreams, ver. 15, &c.

2. (When that will not do) by afflictions, ver. 19, &c.

3. To

3. To make those afflictions more intelligible and more effectual, he sends a messenger, &c. This is the business of the Text, *If there be with him, &c.* wherein you may observe two parts.

1. A supposition v. 23. *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, &c.* 2. A position, ver. 24. *Then he is gracious to him, &c.* The words may be called, the sick mans cordial, or his restorative, wherein you may observe: 1. The patient, expressed in the word *him*. 2. The disease, his danger, and misery—*he is going down to the pit*. 3. The Physician, who is described: 1. *Ab officio*, by his office, a messenger. 2. *Ab opere*, by his work, an interpreter. 3. *A praesentia*, a rare man, one of a thousand.—*multi in millibus unus*. 4. The Physick, to shew unto a man his uprightness. 5. The cure, *then he is gracious, &c.* Where are considerable:

1. The quality of it, the kind of the cure, deliver him from going down to the pit, i.e. from mortal sickness.

2. The spring of it, Gods grace, he is gracious.

3. The meritorious cause of it, I have found a ransom.

4. The declaration of it, he saith, &c.

The difficulties are neither many nor great, yet some things there are which need explication; *If a messenger*] an Angel; i.e. by office, not by nature, for so the word is oft used in Scripture, both in the Old Testament, Mal. 3. 1. *Behold I will send my messenger, Hebr. מלאכי* my Angel, which the infallible Interpreter, the Lord Jesus, tells us was meant of John the Baptist, Mat. 11. 10. *This is he of whom it is written, Behold I send a messenger, &c.* and in the New Testament, Rev. 2. and 3. where the Pastors of the several Churches are called Angels: and so it is most fitly understood here, both because, God did then and still doth most generally use the Ministry of men rather than Angels in counselling and comforting afflicted men; and because he is called one of a thousand, a phrase which implies as his excellency and fitness for that work, so the insufficiency of most of the same kind for it; which must not be charged upon the meanest of Gods elect Angels.

An interpreter] viz. of the mind and will of God: Christ is the great interpreter, Job. 1. 18. but he when he ascendeth on high gave forth this gift, and left us interpreters in his stead, Eph. 4. 11. &c.

To shew unto a man his righteousness] i.e. mans own righteousness (to say nothing of the other senses); for, it is the sin and unrighteousness of a man which causeth his disease, and the sense of that sin which makes his disease bitter and formidable: sin is the sting of every affliction.

tion: now then *omnis curatio fit per contraria*, all cures are wrought by contraries; when therefore a faithful Messenger or Minister of Christ having made the sick man sensible of his sin, and afterwards of the pardon of it, and when he comes to discover to him his righteousness, uprightness, holiness, *then God is gracious*, &c. although it is not at all impossible that here may be a reference to Christs righteousness, for Job is no stranger to that, and the word ransom carries an evident relation thither. So that both may be conjoynd.

Then be (i.e. God) is gracious] God is always gracious in himself, in his own nature, but he is gracious to none, but in his own way, and upon his own terms. God is not gracious to unrighteous and unholy persons: but when men return from their sins, &c. *God is gracious*, and saith, i.e. God saith, *Deliver him*—He saith so to his Minister, he gives him Commission to deliver him, i.e. to declare him to be delivered, God delivers men *authoritative & realiter*, Ministers only *Ministerialiter & declarative*: it is an usual phrase; Ministers are said to do, that which they declare God will do, Jer. 1. 10. *I have set thee over kingdoms and nations* (saith God to Jeremiah) *to root out, and pull down, and destroy, i. e. to declare that I will do it.*

I have found a ransom—I have received satisfaction, i.e. in the death of my Son, which was a ransom satisfactory for the sins of his people. And farther, it is by virtue of this ransom that Gods people are delivered, not only from hell, but from any other miseries. Indeed, as Divines distinguish of the resurrection of the godly, and the wicked, so the temporal deliverances which wicked men receive, they are the effects of common providence; but those which Christs members receive, they have as the fruits of Christs purchase. And well saith God, *I have found a ransom*: for it is beyond the wit of men or Angels to find out such an admirable way for mans salvation: Thus you have had the coherence, division, and sense of the words.

There are several Doctrines which these words would afford, but I shall forbear the very mention of them, and only speak of this one, which falls to my share.

Doct. That the seasonable instruction of sick and languishing persons, is a work as of great advantage, so of great skill and difficulty.

I need not spend much time in the proof, yet something must be said of it: there are two branches.

1. It is of great advantage. 2. It is of great difficulty.

1. That it is a work of great advantage. It is convenient to say something of this, because I take it to be a common mistake of many persons,

persons, they are apt to think, that sick-bed applications are in a manner useless and ineffectual: it may be a discouragement which the Devil proposeth to Ministers or others, to make them neglect this work, or be formal in it, especially when the persons are ignorant or profane: the Devil may suggest the invalidity of a sick-bed repentance, the customariness and hypocrisy of sick-bed desires, &c. Now to obviate such suggestions, consider these things.

1. That the instruction of sick persons is Gods institution, so you see in the Text—— *a messenger*, i. e. one sent of God to this purpose: now Gods institutions are not in vain: every institution of God carries a promise in its bowels to him that doth not *ponere obicem*, that doth rightly use it: Ministers or Christian friends may go about it with much comfort, for it is Gods work, as he said, *Have not I commanded you, &c.* It is one of those ways (as you see in the Chapter) which God ordained to reclaim sinners: and when you attempt it, you may expect Gods concurrence. You may pray in faith for Gods assistance in his Ordinance.

2. Gods mercie is proposed by himself, and may be offered by Ministers, even to languishing persons: it is true, it must be done cautiously (as you shall hear) but it may be done. God doth indefinitely tender his mercy to all, and we must not limit where God limits not: Ministers may safely follow Gods example. And whereas it may be thought that such men only come to God as driven by necessity: you must know that God is so gracious, that he receives even such whom meer necessity drives to him, and indeed all true converts are first persuaded to come to God by the sense of their own necessities, though afterwards they are elevated to a more noble disposition: God never rejected any upon this ground: how many came to Christ meerly in sense of their bodily maladies, and were sent away with spiritual cure? Christ received her that came not to him, till she had in vain tried all other Physicians. So in that parable of the Prodigal (wherein God is pleased to represent the methods of his grace in the conversion and salvation of sinners) you shall find that God doth not reject that poor prodigal, because he was forced home by that, *Durum telum, necessitas*, by insuperable straits and difficulties.

3. Sick-bed repentance is not wholly impossible (though it be hard) sickness is one means that God useth to work repentance, God can work repentance even upon a sick-bed, and it is God that must do it, even in health; and to speak truly and strictly, although the means of repentance be more probable, and the truth of repentance more discernable in health than in sickness, yet the practice of repentance is

as hard a work in health as in sickness, seeing in both cases it is the great work of the omnipotent God, who hath ever challenged it as his royal prerogative to give repentance; whatever those *hostes gratia Christi* (as *Austin* calls them) say to the contrary; so that in short, with men, repentance is always impossible, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil*, Jer. 13. 23. but with God it is always possible. And yet to prevent the abuse of this, by a presumptuous putting off repentance to the time of sickness, and death, upon this pretence; I must add, that such as put off repentance on such a pretext do seldom meet with it. God doth seldom give repentance to such persons: and it is a general observation of all serious Divines; that late repentance is seldom true, though true repentance is never late, it being the just judgment of God, that they that intend to mock God by putting off repentance should deceive themselves, and die without repentance.

2. That it is a work of great difficulty might easily be demonstrated, but that will appear in the further prosecution of it all along, only there are two Arguments which the Text suggests.

1. That it is a work which God hath put into the hands of his chief Officers, his Ministers, who ought to be the most accomplished persons of all others, &c. this is one of those works for which God hath vouchsafed such singular gifts unto his Messengers.

2. That it is not every Minister neither who is fit for this work, and therefore here it is required, that he be one of a thousand.

But this I shall pass over, and come to that which is allotted to me, the resolution of this great and important case of Conscience: *How Ministers or Christian friends may and ought to apply themselves to sick persons for their good, and the discharge of their own consciences*. I take it to be one of the hardest parts of the Ministerial works to make seasonable applications to such persons. I shall therefore endeavour to answer it, though not so fully as the point deserves, yet so far as the brevity of this Exercise will permit, in these eight Propositions or Directions.

1. Endeavour must be used to understand the state of the sick person; As Physicians do by sick persons, they enquire into the manner of their life, diet, &c. it is a great step to the cure, to know the Patients temper, because as bodily so spiritual Physick must be suited to the temper, and disposition, and condition of the Patient. And as Physicians take pains in this by conference with friends, and by examining the Patient; so should Ministers by discourse with religious acquaintance, and by searching conference with the sick persons, endeavour to find out the

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truth

truth, for why should not men be as accurate in healing mens souls, as their bodies? since the very Heathen could say, That all our care should be translated from the things of the body, to the soul, so *Epicetus* in his 63, Chapter, *Ἀφ' ὧν ἐμνήσθη τὸ ἐνδονοῦν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὸ σῶμα, &c.* And as for the body men prize those Physicians most that best know their temper, &c. so should sick persons prefer (*ceteris paribus*) that faithful Minister that hath most knowledg of them, &c.

2. The great business is to bring the sick-man to a true sight of his state and condition: indeed this is an happy thing, whatever his condition be. If his condition be sound and good, then it is an happiness to know it, that he may have the comfort of it, if it be bad, yet it is an happiness to know it, that a man may be capable of counsel, and put into the way to amend it: it is true, evil men, like persons much in debt, care not to look into their books, and understand their debts, but they must be brought to it. And the worse thy condition is, the more art thou concerned to discover it, for to be ignorant of thy condition, if it be good, only hinders thee from comfort, but if it be bad, it hinders thee from salvation: you and they must both consider, that as the heart is always deceitful, so then especially for three reasons amongst others. 1. Then men are impotent and unable to examine themselves, their natural parts are weakned, the eyes of their mind clouded: their mind is diverted by bodily pains that it cannot attend, and so may sooner be cheated. 2. Then men are sloathful and listless as to all spiritual exercises: if even good men are sloathful in their most healthful times, how much more evil men in times of sickness? The listlessness of the body generally makes an answerable impression upon the faculties of the soul; that being a received truth amongst Physicians and Philosophers, and ratified by daily experience, that *mores animi, sequuntur temperamentum corporis*. 3. In times of sickness men are greedy of comfort, and so will catch even at a shadow, &c. Upon all these grounds there needs the more caution, to set before his eyes the folly and misery of self-deceit, especially in everlasting matters.

3. Ministers and others must take great heed lest while they avoid one extream, they run upon another, which is a common error in practise; some for the prevention of despair, have made such unseasonable applications of comfort, as have begotten presumptuous hopes. Others again to prevent presumption, have so indiscreetly aggravated things as to render them hopeles, and so careless, &c. there must therefore be a prudent contemperation of things together: as the wise Physician mixeth several ingredients, he puts in indeed things of a sharp and

and corroding nature, which may eat out or remove the noxious humours, but addeth to them things of a more gentle temperature, which by their lenity may correct the acrimony of the former: God himself sets us a copy by the mouth of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 12. 20. *You have done all this wickedness*, there is the corollions, he faithfully discovers that, and doth not dawbe with them, yet, lest the disease should rather be exasperated than removed, he adds this healing counsel, yet *turn not aside from following the Lord*, and this *Cordial*, v. 22. *The Lord will not forsake his people*: and *Ezra* follows it, *Ezra* 10. 2. *We have trespassed against God, and have taken strange wives, yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this, now therefore let us make a covenant with God*.

4. The same methods are not to be used to all sick persons: you might as well give the same pill to all diseased persons, whereas that which would cure one, will kill another; you may as well make one suit for all bodies: discreet Physicians diversifie their applications, according to the difference of the Patients disposition and condition; so here. And there are many differences to be eyed here.

1. Difference of tempers, whether tender, or rough and stubborn, as you read it is the husbandman's discretion that the fitches are not thrashed with a threshing instrument, neither is the cart-wheel turned upon the cummine, but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod, *Isa.* 28. 27. so it must be the discretion of a Minister, to have respect to the different tempers of men, in his applications to them: it is said of Christ, he taught the Disciples as they were able to bear.

2. Difference of education and conversation, some have been nuzzled in ignorance, others brought up in the knowledg of the truth, not considering of this, occasions much mischief: Discourse to an ignorant person of the necessity of faith and repentance, you lose your labour oft times, he conceits he hath believed and repented; for he takes faith to be a believing, though without any grounds, That God hath pardoned him, and repentance a crying God mercy, &c. one must consider where foundations must be laid——and where we need only raise superstructions: some have had a loose and profane education, others civil and religious: the former require more terrour, the latter more caution, lest they deceive themselves.

3. Difference of guilt. Great difference is to be made in the handling of sinners of a smaller size, and inveterate sinners: as God expects, so Ministers must endeavour that sorrow may bear some proportion with the sin——*Peter* having sinned grievously, wept bitterly, *Mat.* 27. ult.

5. It is a very bad guide to follow the counsels or desires of sick persons, or their carnal friends. It fares with faithful Ministers, as with honest and able Physicians, that are many times ill thought of by the sick man, and foolish friends, when they put him to pain, or trouble, they charge him with cruelty and delighting to torment the poor man unnecessarily, and it may be think of discharging him, and getting a Physician that will deal more gently with him: whereas indeed he is the sick mans best friend, and many times should he not pain him, he would kill him: so is it here, Come to a sick man, he cries, Comfort for Gods sake, so say his friends, and they think all is done, if they can get comfort: why, you shall have it, but in due time; you shall have ease, health, &c. but you must be contented to wait for it, and expect it in due order, first you must be sick; oft times that Physick is the best, which makes you sickest; you shall be healed, but if you would proceed regularly, and work a true cure, you must first have your wound searched, and then healed, else you have only a palliative cure, and the wound will fester inwardly: and it is an horrible mistake of sick persons, they think comfort is all they are to look after. I tell you, it is not present comfort, but everlasting happiness, you must make your business to get: it is not *Augustus* his *euvarasia*, to die quietly, like a Lamb, (as the vulgar phrase it) but a Scripture *euvarasia*, to die the death of the righteous: it is not so much a calm, and sweet, and easie passage, (the fishes have that, when they swim down the sweet stream of *Jordan*, into the dead sea, where they perish) but a safe harbour; one may go to heaven in a storm, and to hell in a calm; and which is better, judg you: those wretches in *Psal. 73*, have no bands in their death, and yet death hath dominion over them. Comfort is not the great business you need.

6. The same course for substance is to be taken for the conversion of sick and healthful persons, &c. there is but one way to heaven, for all persons; and therefore consider with your selves what you would do, if they were in health, and what were necessary then, why, that same course you must take now: and if it be more troublesome to sick persons, they may thank themselves for it, who neglected the time of their health, &c. indeed sick men are apt to favour themselves, and to think God will accept of less from them, than others, whereas, if possible, they have need to do more than others, and to make the more haste, having the less time for their Work.

7. The greatest care must be to keep sick persons from those errors whereby such persons commonly miscarry, such as these,

1. Insensibleness of their danger, whereas the first step to cure, is to

to know ones malady. It is a dreadful thing to see poor ignorant and unconverted sinners, at the very brink of the pit, ready to drop into hell, and not at all affected with it, &c. If ever you mean to do them any good, you must awaken them out of that mortal sleep or lethargy, lighten their eyes with a conviction of their danger, lest they sleep the sleep of death.

2. Willingness to be deluded. You may know it thus: If a daubing Minister or friend offers comfort, how greedily they catch it: They will receive comfort upon any grounds, nay upon no grounds, but upon the bare words, it may be of a time-serving, and man-pleasing Minister. But let a serious and faithful Minister come to them, and shew them their sad and sinful, and hazardous condition, and demonstrate it by irrefragable arguments, they will not yield to it. But as St. Peter speaks, 2 Pet. 3. 5. *λανθάνει αὐτοῖς τὰ τοιαῦτα*, this they willingly are ignorant of. You must possess them with the folly of such a temper, the unavoidable misery of self-deluding persons, &c. and the dread of disappointment when too late.

3. Carelessness and listlessness; This is the temper of many, knowing the difficulty of believing, repenting, &c. and remembering their own guilt, they cast off the care of that, which they think will be to no purpose, &c. You must therefore possess them with the necessity of Christian carefulness; what madness it is to be careless now, which is the only season of caring to any purpose, &c. What folly it is to free themselves from the care of a few days, to ascertain to themselves everlasting care and torment, &c. Also you must possess them with the benefit of this care, and laying it to heart, &c. That it is Gods course in opening the heart, to stir up this care.

4. Resting in generals. *Dolosus versatur in generalibus*. This deceives many in Hell: You may discourse excellently against sin in the general, and raise in them some passion against it, yet not profit them at all, &c. For true repentance takes notice of particular sins, &c. And as generals have no existence, but in the particulars, according to principles of Philosophy? So it is sin in particular, which doth primarily affect the heart of a true penitent.

5. The concealment of some hidden way of wickedness, I believe, hath sent many to Hell, they would never make their disease known, through fear of shame, &c. As some persons have died of those diseases which they have smothered. It is true, a man is not bound to make confession of all his sins to a Minister, as we rightly assert against Papists: but yet all Divines grant, that in many cases it is both expedient

and

and necessary to acknowledge thy wickedness to men, and to say nothing of those cases wherein it is sometimes necessary, nor of many reasons which make it frequently expedient, I shall only instance in one, which is sufficient of it self many times; that the Physician knowing more exactly thy malady, may more effectually proportion his remedy. Possess them with this in such cases, How infinitely better it is to have some shame before a friend, who will cover your shame, and hate to reproach you with it, than before all the world. Convince them, what folly it is to be unfaithful to themselves, &c.

8. Take heed of healing the souls of sick persons slightly. This we are very apt to. 1. From the sick mans greedy desire of comfort. 2. From the expectation and desire of carnal friends. 3. From our own careless hearts, that love not to put our selves to any trouble or reproach (which we shall meet with, if we be faithful in this case) however take heed of it, *Jer. 8. 11. They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.* This is the case: A soul (whether in sickness or in health) must first be wounded, then healed. There must be sorrow and travel ere the Man-child be brought forth. There must be true repentance and godly sorrow——deep sorrow, (They dawb, that tell you otherwise, and make God a liar), Great heaviness of heart, &c. Repentance is neither a short, nor a superficial work.——Perswade them to wait Gods leisure, and in Gods way for the cure, not to precipitate your work: Perswade them not to be afraid of sorrows, troubles, &c. but rather to fear the want of it; for here is a common and a fatal mistake, most men are afraid of sorrow, and labour to drive away sorrow: Whereas indeed sorrow is the midwife of all true joy. Tears of penitential sorrow, are the streams that lead us to the Rivers of pleasure, which are at Gods right hand: It is none other than the Gate of Heaven, the fountain of comfort: And on the contrary, to be a stranger to godly sorrow, is one of the dreadfulest signs of a lost soul. The laughter of such a person, is a *Risus Sardonius*, a deadly joy. Labour more to work a solid, then a sudden cure.

There are other directions I thought to have given, but these may suffice, and I will conclude all with two or three Uses, first to Ministers, then to people.

1. To Ministers. Hence we may learn the great difficulty of the Ministerial work, we see one reason why *Paul* said, *Who is sufficient for these things?* O what a sin and shame it is to see what persons venture upon this work? that such undertake to be shepherds of Christs Flock, that
are

are hardly fit to be set with the dogs of the flock? *Father forgive them, they know not what they do.* Many act, as if they thought this were all the work of a Minister to make a few Sermons, read some Prayers, &c. No, no, a Minister must be thoroughly furnished to every good work. He must be apt and able for every work: This, among others. O what Angelical abilities doth it require! Acuteness to discern the sick mans temper, knowledg. to understand the nature of all Spiritual Diseases, the Symptoms, the Prognosticks, as also the Antidotes and Remedies. Wisdom to make suitable, speedy Applications. O how hard a case is it! Many sick men can neither endure *morbum*, nor *remedium*, neither the disease of their souls, nor their remedy, &c. A Minister had need know all things, understand all persons, discern the subtilties of mens hearts, and not be ignorant of the wiles of the Devil.

How many knots must he be able speedily to untie? How many cases must he be able to give speedy resolution to? And he must be supposed to have laid up with great industry, because he must bring forth out of his Treasure, *things both new and old.* O the difficulty! It is a sad thing to consider, that many souls do perish, not only *vi morbi*, by the force of their Disease, but also *errore medici*, by the error of their Physician, by the mistakes of their Ministers: And as *Galen* speaks of Physick for the body, it is also true of the Physick of the Soul: *In medicina nihil exiguum.* In Physick nothing is little; a small error there, may occasion fearful mischiefs: So a small mistake in souls concernments, may occasion a souls everlasting ruine.

2. To people: Is it of such difficulty? O labour you to do your work in health, while time and strength last, before the evil days come, &c. It is a serious Admonition of *Gregories* in his Book *De cura pastorali*, *Salus corporis quando ad bene operandum accepta despicitur quanti sit munus amissa sentitur*: He that neglects the time of health for the doing of his great work, he shall feel the worth of it by the want of it. I beseech you let me reason with you: Why will you run an hazard, when you may go a safe way? Consider what woful straits you will bring your selves to, if you do not ponder your ways, and fix your thoughts, and afflict your hearts, you kill your souls; if you do, perhaps your bodies, &c. what a dreadful Dilemma is this, &c. The Physician chargeth you not to trouble your selves with sad thoughts, lest you overthrow your bodies: and the Minister, if he will be faithful, must charge you to trouble your selves, lest you lose your souls. O consider now; now you may consider, you have the use of reason, then reason may be lost, &c. Now God will accept of you, then it may be he will reject you,

you, as *Prov. 1.* Now you are at leisure to consider, then *sufficient unto the day will be the evil thereof.* And therefore be perswaded to improve the time of health. It is the general custom of sick persons to send for Ministers to prepare them for the future life, when they despair of the enjoyment of this present life. A learned man wittily observed, that as they say, *Ubi desinit Philosophus, incipit Medicus* : So it may be said, *Ubi desinit Medicus, incipit Theologus*, Where the Physician ends, the Divine begins. Thus they begin to live at the end of their life: But you, if you be wise take this counsel (and O that my words might prevail with you) desire to speak with able and godly Ministers in the time of your health: That, that is the acceptable time; Then may they give counsel freely, and you may follow their counsel throughly. That was the course of those Converts, *Act. 2.* They did not tarry till their souls were ready to breathe out themselves into eternity, but in the time of their health applied themselves to *Peter, &c.* Men and brethren, what shall we do ?

2. Make such applications to your friends in health, as you must do in sickness (if you mean to discharge your duty to God, or friendship to them) you will give them and your selves too great ease and advantage by it, &c. Remember what obligeth you to do it in sickness, obligeth you also in health; you are your Brothers keepers, you have all, *curam animarum*, cure of souls. And as Ministers are bound to this work *virtute officii*, by virtue of their office, so you are bound to it, *ex lege charitatis* : And surely if every one of you, are bound to deliver your neighbours Oxe or Ass, when you see it falling into a pit; much more are you obliged to have compassion upon their souls, when they are going down to the pit, from which there is no redemption.

How

How must we reprove, that we may
not partake of other mens
SINS?

I Tim. 5. part. 22. v.

*Neither be partaker of other mens sins, keep
thy self pure.*



His Epistle is a Scripture Directory for Church Government. In this Chapter there are certain general Rules, or Canons Apostolical, which St. Paul enjoyns Timothy to observe;

1. About Church-Widows, how they must be qualified, to the 17th v.

2. About Church-Elders, how they must be ordered,

to the end.

1. About their Maintenance and Encouragement, v. 17. 18.

2. About their Credit and Reputation, v. 19.

3. About their Reproof and Correction, v. 20.

4. About their Admission and Ordination, Text.

Lay hands suddenly on no man. Some understand this of the hands

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of

Salmiron. of Absolution, others of the bands of Benediction, others of the bands of
Gail. Confirmation, but most and best, of the bands of Ordination, i. e. Ordain
Chrys. Theoph. no man, admit no man into this Sacred and weighty Office and Fun-
Theod. Calvin. ction of the Ministry, suddenly. Suddenly, i. e. not before natural ca-
 pacity, not without competent ability, not unless qualified with piety,
Param. Esim. industry, gravity. The danger follows, Neither be partaker of other mens
 sins.

1. Not of their sins who would importune thee to Ordain unworthy
 persons, *Consentiendo*, by consenting.

Esim. 2. Not of their sins who do Ordain unworthy persons, *Imitando*, by
 imitating.

Oecumenius. 3. Not of their sins who are Ordained, being unworthy persons : and
 that,

Esim in loc. 1. Not of their sins before Ordination, *Approbando*, by approving of
 them.

2. Not of their sins after Ordination, *Confirmando*, by confirming them
 in them. For, says the Apostle in the next verse but one, *Some mens sins*
are open before-hand, going before to judgment, i. e. the Crisis, or Test, or
Censure, or Judgment of the Church : and some follow after. This is the
Grammatical sense and Logical Analysis of the words.

But beloved, I must take leave to handle the words in a greater la-
 titude and extent : For certainly this Caution is not intended to Mi-
 nisters only, neither is it to be confined to the Case of Ordination ; but
Mat. 13 37. as Christ said upon another occasion, *What I say unto you, I say unto all.*
 So here, what Saint Paul writes to Timothy, he speaks to all ?
 a private Christian as well as a Minister ; a Church-member, as well
 as a Church-Elder, must be sure to take heed, that he be not partaker of
 other mens sins. The Case of Conscience to be discussed this morning
 is this :

Case.

How must we reprove, and not partake of other mens sins.

Cant. 4. 2. And indeed this Case is complex and double, it bears twins.

1. About Participation of other mens sins.

2. About Reproving of other mens sins.

I must beg leave to project and manage my discourse Sermon-wise,
 and so commend to your Christian meditation this Truth and Do-
 ctine. In the explication whereof, I shall handle the former Case, and
 in the application the latter.

Doctr. It ought to be every mans care, not to partake of any mans sin
 Neither be partaker —

In

In the handling of which I shall endeavout to shew you,

1. *How a man may be guilty of other mens sins, or how many ways a man may be said to partake of other mens sins.*

2. *Why a Christian must be careful not to partake of other mens sins.*

3. *To apply it.*

1. *How a man may be said to partake of other mens sins:* To this I answer, There are many ways whereby we contract the guilt of others sins: Lord, says David, *who knows how oft he offends?* I will name some of them.

There are eight ways especially noted in Scripture, by all which a man is made partaker, and becomes guilty of the sins of others.

1. *By contrivance*, by plotting and contriving of sin, by provoking and soliciting others to sin; and this is in an high degree to be guilty of other mens sins. Thus *Jonabab* was guilty of *Ammons* Incest by his subtle contriving of that wickedness, by being a Pander to that Villany, 2 Sam. 13. 5.

When a man shall wittingly and willingly spread a snare in his brothers way, and either drive him in by provocation, or decoy him in by allurements, he makes himself a partaker of his sin, E.g. to provoke a man to Passion, to tempt a person to Drunkenness and uncleanness, to put a man upon Murder and blood-shed, to draw souls into Error, Heresie, Blasphemy, &c. this is to espouse and adopt the sin, and to make it a mans own.

You know the Story there, 2 Sam. 11. *Uriah* was slain with the edge of the sword, *David* was many miles off when *Uriah* was slain; he died in the battel, *Joab* put him in the front, and the *Ammonites* slew him: but now because *David* plotted and contrived all this, the Scripture tells us that *David* was the Murderer, 2 Sam. 12. 9. *Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, thou hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.* Though the blade was the *Ammonites*, and the bilt might be said to be *Joabs*; yet the hand was *Davids*, and the deed was *Davids*. The *Ammonites* slew him, but *David* murdered him. *St. Paul* tells us, he was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, 1 Tim. 1. 13. Why Beloved, we do not read of any blasphemy that *St. Paul* uttered in all the Bible: Oh but, says he, *I compelled the Saints to blaspheme*, Act. 26. 11. There was his blasphemy in compelling others to blaspheme.

Beloved, to incite and provoke any to sinful practices, to seduce and solicit any to loose doctrines and erroneous opinions, it is to be doubly

guilty of those sins, once by *infection*, and again by *instigation*.

Hence is that frequent expression among the Fathers concerning *Arius* the Heretick, that look how many souls he had seduced to his heresie and blasphemy, so many several additions of torments he had in hell, as guilty of all their sins: Oh man, who ever thou art that makest thy neighbour drunk, by putting the bottle to his mouth; that callest to thy brother, saying, *Cast in thy lot amongst us, and let us have one purse*; that inticest the soul of the simple with a *Come, let us take our fill of loves, and solace our selves untill the morning*: I tell thee, thou art guilty of all their sins, and mayest justly be punished with all their plagues: for this, *Christians*, is a most *Devillish* practice, to tempt and provoke others to wickedness. All sins indeed are *devillish* sins, *Per modum servitutis*; but some sins are *devillish* sins, *Per modum imaginis*. In all sins, men bear the *Devils* yoke, 1 Joh. 3. 8, but in some sins, men bear the *Devils* image.

Five Sins especially the Scripture brands as *devillish* Sins, and this is the chief, 1. *False accusation*, 2 Tim. 3. 3, *Mens shall be false accusers*, *Devils*, says the Greek. 2. *Lying*, Joh. 8. 44. *you are of your father the Devil, for he is a liar and the father of it*. 3. *Pride*, 1 Tim. 3. 6. *not a novice, lest puffed up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*. 4. *Persecution*, Rev. 2. 10. *the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, i. e. devillish men-persecutors*. 5. *Temptation*, as this is, *Get thee behind me Satan*, says *Christ* to *Peter*, when he tempted him, Mat. 16. 23. He that shall either binder another of doing that good which is commanded, or shall further another to the doing of that evil which is prohibited, is justly chargeable with both their Sins.

2. By compliance, by consenting and complying with Sin and Sinners, so a man makes himself partaker: though he has no hand in't, yet if he has a heart in't, though he does not *ad* it, yet if he likes it, and loves it, and approves it, though he does not persecute Gods Saints and Ministers, yet if he saith, *Aha, aha!* so would we have it, 'tis enough to make him guilty before God.

Saul, he had no hand in *St. Stephens* death, he did not cast one stone at him; but because he looked on with approbation, and stood by with consent, Act. 8. 1. *Saul was consenting unto his death*, therefore was he esteemed guilty of his blood and murder, and so himself confesses, when God had awakened him, and humbled him to repentance, Act. 22. 20. *When the blood of thy Martyr Stephen was shed, I was consenting to his death*, and so charges himself as guilty of it.

God looks not upon the outward man so much as upon the heart, according

according to the frame and inclination of the heart, according as the pulse of the heart beats, so is every man in the account and esteem of God, if Sin has once storm'd the Fort-Royal of the heart, though it never appears in the out-work, the Garrison is lost: That which is upon the stage of the heart after consent, is as truly acted in the sight of God, as that which appears in the outward man by commission. Matth. 15. 19. Out of the heart proceeds murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies. Why beloved, from the hand proceeds Murders and Thefts, Ephes. 4. 28. from the eye proceeds Adulteries and Fornications, 2 Pet. 2. 14. and from the tongue proceeds false witness and blasphemies, Psal. 120. 3. Oh but the heart is the forge of all.

You may murder a man with a thought, as they say the Basilisk will with a look, such a poysonous thing a wicked heart is; and let me tell you, 'tis the heart-murder, and the heart-adultery, and the heart-blasphemy, and the heart-iniquity, that God especially judges, according to that famous place, Jer. 17. 10. I the Lord search the heart, to give to every man according to his ways, i.e. according to what I see acted and done upon the stage of the heart, says God; he does not only judg the actions, but he judges the very intentions.

3. By Connivance, by a sinful dissembling, flattering and winking at others in their wickedness and sins, to men become guilty of others sins, Isa. 9. 16. The leaders of this people cause them to erre; 'tis in the Hebrew, The Blessers of this people cause them to erre. Beloved, the blessers of men in wickedness are the leaders of men in wickedness; he that shall wink at, and flatter men in Sins, when he knows in his conscience that they do wickedly, he makes himself Captain and Master of Mis-rule among them. And thus we are too prone to be partakers of Magistrates sins, and Governours sins, and great mens sins, Patrons sins, and Landlords sins. If the Grandees of the world profane the Sabbath, dishonour God, rant and swear, and scoff at Religion; out of a base cowardly spirit, or out of a carnal covetous heart, we flatter them and let them alone, it may be applaud them, as he said, Tu fac bene Dominum, te facit ille Deum, do but make him a Lord, and he straight-way makes thee a God; as if we were not to distinguish between the persons of men, and the vices of men, or as if so be we more feared a mortal man, whose breath is in his nostrils, than we do the immortal God, who can frown us into hell in a moment: Oh this is to be deeply guilty of other mens Sins. See how sharply God by his Prophet taxes and reproves this dawbing in those wicked upholders, that

כחמר
העם

Benificantes:
populum.

for

few pillows to every elbow, Ezek. 13. 17. and so forward. Read it at leisure.

I fear this has been the sin of former Times and Governments, God grant it may not be the Sin of present and future Ages, for men to connive at any that promote their own interests.

Alas, my brethren, methinks the interest of Piety, and the interest of Conscience, and the interest of the eternal God, judg of quick and dead, should swallow up all the interests of the world. If *Nebuchadnezzar* himself should set up a golden Image, and would have it worshipped, I tell you 'tis not treason for *Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego* to say, *We are not careful of King to answer thee in this matter*, Dan. 3. 16.

Besides, let not men deceive themselves, for such persons as can so easily betray the interest of God, will never be afraid, if opportunity serve, to oppose the sovereignty of man, whose authority he bears, and are not indeed *Husbands*, but *Ziba's*, not *David's* friends, but *David's* flatterers.

4. By *sufferance*, by permitting the sins of others, so we become guilty, by suffering others to sin, whom we are bound in duty, and may be able by authority to hinder; and thus as in the former particular, we are guilty of *Magistrates* sins, in this particular *Magistrates* oft-times become guilty of *our* sins. Kings and Rulers, and subordinate *Magistrates* become oft-times deeply guilty of their peoples sins, namely, by *sufferance*, by tolerating Errors, and Heresies, and Blasphemies on the one hand, or by suffering wickedness and profaneness on the other.

That Ruler or Magistrate that shall suffer either loose opinions or principles, that are contrary to sound doctrine, to be broach'd, or loose ways and customs, that are contrary to the power of godliness, to be observed, and shall not use his authority to prevent and suppress them, he contracts to himself the guilt, and draws upon himself the mischief of all those Sins and Enormities: Just as he that licences a Book to the Press, if there be any faults of ignorance, or error, or poisonous opinions, they may be justly charged upon him and laid at his door, though he is not the Author, yet because he is the Licenser, though he is not the Parent, yet because he is the midwife. So if there be any heresie and blasphemy, tolerated in a place, if there be any profaneness and ungodliness suffered among a people, because it has the *Magistrates Imprimatur*, and he suffers it to pass the Country without whipping, therefore he's highly guilty.

Sabbath-breaking abounds, let it pass, says the Maior of a Town, drunken-

drunkenness abounds, let it alone says the Justice of peace ; profaneness abounds, let it go, says the Minister. Sirs, if it should be thus, this were to bear the sins of a whole Parish, and a whole County, and a whole Nation upon a mans back at once. See that Rev. 2. to this purpose. Where you find the sins of the people charged upon the Governours for their permission and toleration, both sins of Doctrine and Practice. Of Doctrine, Rev. 2. 12, 14, 15. *Unto the Angel of the Church of Pergamus write. I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, so hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.* This is charged upon the Angel, the Overseer and Governour of the Church, he should have hindered it, and he did tolerate and permit it, and it was his Sin ; and so of Practice, Rev. 2. 18, 20. *Unto the Angel of the Church in Thyatira, write, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufficest that woman Jezabel, which calleth her self a Prophetess to teach and seduce, &c.* To suffer Jezabel to teach in a Nation, is to suffer painting, and wantonness, and uncleanness : these were the Sins of Jezabel, and to permit them is to partake of them.

Object. ' But some may object and say, Why does God then permit Sin to be in the world ? he might binder it, and he might prevent it, if he would ; there could be no wickedness acted under the Sun, but by Gods permission ; the Devil could not tempt Job, nor Satan could not sift Peter without leave and commission from God, neither could any wicked man act his villany, and spit out his venom, without Gods sufferance. If permission of Sin be a partaking of Sin, how shall we vindicate God from the imputation of unrighteousness ?

Ans. 1. This was Marcion's wicked and malicious cavil at Gods providence about the first Transgression ; Why would not God, who foresaw the issue, binder Eve and the Devil from conference and communion together, that so Sin might have been prevented, and the world been everlastingly happy ? unless (saith he) God was either envious and would not, or weak and could not hinder it. To which Tertullian replies, Because God was arbitrary and free in his gifts. Austin answers, Because it was his will. Prosper and Hilary reply, The cause may be unknown, it cannot be unjust. All which is enough, or obturate, to muzzle that Heaven-daring mouth of Blasphemy. But afterward Austin answers, That though sin be the worst thing in the world, yet the existence of sin is not ill ; as poyson would do no hurt if men would not meddle with it ; but that satisfies not our case. Therefore,

2. Though God hath authority, and is of ability to prevent and binder
thee

the Commission of sin, yet he is not bound in duty so to do. God is under no tye and obligation, but his own purpose and pleasure, *Dei non tenetur Legibus*, God is a Law to himself. Herein lies the guilt and evil of mans permitting of sin, he is bound in duty, as well as furnished with ability, and authority to prevent it; and therefore his permitting of sin, is a partaking of sin, *Exod. 22. 18. Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live*; man is bound to hinder prophaneness and wickedness, if he can, but so is not God; though he is of infinite power and ability to restrain it, or to remove it, yet he is not bound in duty; and so it is no unrighteousness in God to suffer sin. Sin is the transgression of the Law, but where there is no Law, there is no transgression.

3. It is no unrighteousness in God to suffer sin, when he may hinder it, because he can by his infinite Wisdom order it to his own glory; he suffered Pharaoh to harden his heart, that he might be glorified on Pharaoh, *Rom. 9. 17. Pharaoh's sin turned to Gods glory*, as he makes all penal evils work together for our good; so he makes all sinful evils concur to his own glory.

4. It is no unrighteousness in God to suffer sin, because he can turn every mans sin to a greater benefit and advantage, *Gen. 50. 20. Thou thought evil against me, saith Joseph to his Brethren, but God meant it unto good*? He can bring good out of evil, and light out of darkness. God suffers Toads and Serpents to live, because they are useful, they suck the noxious and hurtful gists from herbs and flowers, and so make them wholesome for mans use: So God permits sin in the world, because he knows how to make it useful; He can make an Antidote of the Vipers flesh. He did by an excellent and rare Chymistry extract the greatest Mercy from the greatest Mischiefe; the greatest Good from the greatest Evil; the Salvation of Mankind from the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

5. By influence of bad Example, by setting loose and bad Examples for others to imitate: So men are guilty of others sins, as namely, when Children sin by the Examples of their Parents, those very Parents are guilty of their Childrens sin. So we have some Families that inherit the lusts, as well as the lands of their Ancestours; Parents swear and curse, and so do Children; Parents are Drunkards, and so are Children; Parents are unclean, and so are Children; as they make them rich by their Livings, so they make them wretched and debauched by their lives; this is to make themselves partakers of all their sins. So when people sin by the looseness and licentiousness of their Minister; that Minister is guilty of those very sins that the people so commit; which

which made *Austin*, though a very holy man, so exceeding jealous of himself in this case, that that was his constant prayer, *Libera me, Domine, à peccatis meis alienis*, Lord, saith he, deliver me from mine other mens sins; those sins that others have committed through my carelesness and incogitancy.

And indeed *Examples* are more cogent and influential a great deal than *precepts*. The Adulteries of *Jupiter*, and other Pagan Gods did mightily draw the people to imitate their wantonness; and *Augustine* gives the reason, *Magis inieebantur quid fecerat Jupiter, quam quid docuit Plato*; They more minded what *Jupiter* did, then what *Plato* taught.

Jeroboam the son of *Nebat* is said to make *Israel* to sin, that's his brand. How did he make *Israel* to sin? why by his Law he commanded them to sin, but by his practice and Example he made them to sin; He set up *Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel*, and whole herds of people ran a lowing after them. So it is said of Saint *Peter*, that he compelled the Gentiles to Judaize, *Galat. 2. 14. Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?* How did Saint *Peter* compel the Gentiles to Judaize? Not by any thing he preached to them, saith *Hierome*, but by his Example, *non docentis imperio, sed conversantis exemplo*. A stone you know thrown into the water, makes it self but one circle, aye but that one perhaps begets a score, or an hundred: So it is here, he that sets an evil Example, sins not alone, he draws hundreds it may be into sin after him. He is like a man that sets his own house on fire, it burns many of his neighbours, and he is to be answerable for all the ruins.

Epistola Hieronymi intra opera Augustini, Epist. 11.

6. By inference from a bad Example, or by imitation, so a man is guilty of another mans sin, not only by pattern, in setting bad Examples, but also by practice, in following bad Examples; and thus, that man that will be drunk, because another was drunk, or that breaks the Sabbath, because others do the like, he is not onely guilty of his own particular sin, but he is guilty also of their sins whom he imitates and follows, and the reason is, because bad Examples are not Land-marks for us to go by, but they are Sea-marks for us to avoid. Hence you shall find in Scripture mention made of Children by imitation as well as by nature, and people by imitation, as well as by nation, and Kings by imitation, as well as by succession. I'll give you an instance of all these. Look into that *Judges 18. 30. The children of Dan set up the graven image, and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manas-sab, he and his sons were Priests to the Tribe of Dan.* Here Jonathan

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an Idol-Priest, is called the son of *Gershon*, the son of *Manasseb*, i.e. the Grand-child of *Manasseb*. Now it is clear in Scripture, that *Gershon* was the son of *Moses*, and not of *Manasseb*, Exodus 2. 22. & 18. 3. 1 Chron. 23. 15. And so *Jonathan* must be the Grand-child of *Moses*, and not of *Manasseb*. But the *Jews* and learned *Criticks* tell us, that he is called the Grand-child of *Manasseb* for a double reason. 1. Because the Scripture consulting the honour of *Moses*, did conceal his pedigree as to *Moses*, for it had been a disgrace to *Moses*, to have had upon record an Idol-Priest in his lineage; and 2. Which is to my purpose, he is called the Grand-child of *Manasseb*, and that by *prophecy*, and *anticipation*, because he followed him in his Idolatry, he was no whit like *Moses*, but rather imitated *Manasseb*, and so he is called his Grand-child.

For the other instance, see Isa. 1. 10. Hear the word of the Lord ye Rulers of Sodom, and give ear unto the Law of our God ye people of Gomorrah. Why beloved, these that the Prophet speaks to, they were the people of Judah, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem. Why does the Prophet call them the people of Gomorrah? even for this reason, they did imitate those filthy Sodomites and Gomorrahites in wickedness and wantonness, and looseness, and so became guilty of their sins, and worthy of their names.

The last instance you have in 2 Chron. 28. 19. The Lord brought Judah low, because of Ahab King of Israel. Ahab, all know, was King of Judah, and not King of Israel; but he is called King of Israel, because he imitated the wicked and Idolatrous Kings of Israel, he was not so by succession, but he was so by imitation.

Hence it is that God is said to visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, because they make themselves guilty by imitation; and this may be a Key to unlock that place of the Apostle, 2 Tim. 3. 13. Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Deceivers are worse, but the Deceived are worse and worse; if they see a bad Example, and will not avoid it, but copy it, they are worse than worse. The Deceiver is guilty of the deceived's sin by instigation, and the deceived is guilty of the deceivers sin by imitation.

And this is the woful, intricate perplexed Labyrinth, into which sin doth precipitate careless and ungodly Sinners. If thou committest that sin, which none before committed but thee, thou art guilty of all the sins of future Generations by thy Example, as Adam was in the World, and Jeroboam in Israel. And if thou committest any Sin, because others have committed it before thee, thou art guilty of all the sins of former

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Generations, by thy imitation, and so Sin never goes alone; a single sin is as great a solacism in Divinity, as a single thank is in Grammar and Morality; and that you may know Christians, I do not speak without Book in so saying, witness that dreadful place, *Mat. 23. 34, 35, 36. Wherefore behold I send unto you Prophets and wise men, and Scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucifie, and some of them ye shall scourge in your Synagogues, and persecute from City to City. Mark, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the Earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias the Son of Barachias, whom ye slew, though slain in Jeboash reign, almost nine hundred years before, yet ye slew between the Temple and the Altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this Generation: And why? Because they sinned after the similitude of their Fathers transgression. Oh what matter of humiliation is this to every soul that continues in any known sin.*

7. By countenance; by delightful society and company with wicked men to countenance them, so we become partakers of their sins, *1 Cor. 5. 11.* compared with *13.* But now I have written to you not to keep company. If any man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one no not to eat; Therefore put away from among your selves that wicked person. As you would avoid the sin, avoid the sinner: Eating does denote intimate fellowship and familiarity, and we cannot be intimate with such without contracting their guilt to our own souls. 'Tis true indeed, all commerce with such is not forbidden, for then, as the Apostle sayes, we must go out of the world, *verse 10.* But intimate society is upon this account. And therefore the Apostle, or at least the Translator does here seem Critically to distinguish between *companying*, and *keeping companying*, *ver. 9.* compared with *11.* I wrote to you in an Epistle not to company with Fornicators; but now I write to you not to keep company; Company we may, yea, we cannot avoid it, but keep company we must not with wicked men. As elsewhere the Holy Ghost distinguishes between *sinning*, and *committing sin*; He that is born of God doth not commit sin, saith Saint John. The holiest man on this side Heaven cannot but sin, saith the same Apostle, aye but he that is born of God does not commit sin; sin he does, but commit sin he doth not; i.e. he doth not delight in it, he doth not use it, he doth not make it his practice. So here.

We read in Scripture where wicked men have often fared better for the godly, as Laban for Jacob, and Potiphar for Joseph, and Ahab for Jehu.

boſſaphat, &c. but we never read that godly men ſared better for the company of the wicked, but rather worſe, *Plaſ. 119. 115. Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God*; it is a very hard matter to keep wicked company, and to keep the Commandments of God together.

The *Lacedemonians* would never ſuffer a ſtranger to be with them above three days, for fear of infection and corruption with their evil manners. And verily thoſe that are ſtrangers to God and godlineſs, ſhould be as little as may be our companions.

8. By *Maintenance*, by upholding and encouraging men in their ſins, though thou never committeſt them thy ſelf, yet thou art guilty, *2 Job. 11. He that biddeth him God-speed, is partaker of his evil Deeds*. Though thou doeſt not commit it, yet if thou doeſt applaud it, and rejoyce in it, and ſay it is well done, thou art a partner; if thou art not the Mother of it, yet thou art the Nurse of it; if thou art not the Father of it, yet thou art the Guardian of it, and God will lay the brat at thy door, as ſure as if thou hadſt begot it.

Thus I have done with the firſt thing, *how we become guilty, or how many ways partakers of other mens ſins*: There are many more might be named, as by *bindring good*, by *excusing evil*, by *adminiſtring occaſion*, by *not reprovng not mourning*, not *reclaiming*, &c. But theſe and many more that practical Authors handle, they are but *underling-ſprigs* from the great branches that I have opened.

2. *Why a Chriſtian muſt be careful to avoid, and not to partake of other mens ſins?* The reaſons of the Doctrine.

Anſw. Out of a Three-fold principle.

1. Out of a principle of *Charity* to our Brethren.
2. Out of a principle of *Pity* to our ſelves.
3. Out of a principle of *Piety* to God.

1. *Out of charity to our Brethren*, that we be not means and inſtruments to promote their ruine and deſtruction: For, to partake of other mens Sins, though it does more *burthen us*, yet it does never a whit *eaſe them*, but does rather *harden them*, and confirm them in their practices, for company in ſin makes men act it with the greater confidence. Now this is to do the Devils part in the habit of a friend. Sirs, we muſt be charitable, *Charity* is the Golden Rule, *charity* is the bond of perfection; now if it be a piece of charity to help up our Brothers *Oxe* or *Aſs* when he is fallen into a Ditch, *Exod. 23. 4.* Sure 'tis more charity to do as much for his ſoul, *Jude 23. Others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire*. Sin is the deep Ditch of the Soul, and Sin is the Hell-fire of the

the soul, as it were, here should be lifting and plucking indeed.

The neglect of this duty of keeping one another from sin, the Scripture calls an *bating of our Brother*, Lev. 19. 17. *Thou shalt not bate thy Brother in thine heart, Thou shalt not suffer sin upon him.* I observe in company, that if many persons sit together by a fire, and a Spark flye upon any one of them, everyone is ready to shake it off and beat it off; and why should not we be as friendly and charitable to mens souls, when Sin, which is as Hell flakes, lies smothering in their consciences, or burning upon their souls?

2. *Out of pity to our selves*, that we may keep our selves from the blood of other mens souls, and secure our selves from the judgments of other mens sins. For the former, says Sr. Paul, Act. 20. 26, 27. *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God: Had the Apostle connived at, or consented to their sins, God would have made inquisition for the blood of their souls at his hands.* For the latter, says Jacob, Gen. 49. 5, 6, 7. *Simeon and Levi are Brethren, instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. Oh my Soul, come not into their secrets; unto their assembly; mine honour be not thou united. Why? Oh, I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel. He would not have a hand in their sinful union, because he would not have a share in their dreadful division; they were united in sin, and they must be divided in punishment.*

3. *Out of piety towards God*; God forbids it, Ephes. 5. 7. *Be not partakers with them, and God forbid that we should do it! Nay, God abhors it and condemns it, Psalm 50. 18, 21. When thou sawest a Thief, thou consentedst with him, and hast been partakers with the Adulterers, &c. These things hast thou done, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee.* This Sin is a breach of all the Law at once, being against the rule of Charity. He that hath his own sins alone, doth only commit them, but he that takes other mens sin, doth highly approve them; and this greatly dishonours God; it is worse partaking of sin, than committing of sin, Rom. 1. 32. *They do not only do the same, saith the Apostle, but have pleasure in them that do them, that's worse.* Wherefore Zelophchads daughters pleaded in mitigation of their Fathers offence, that he died in his own sin, he was not partner with Korah, but died in his own sin: It is worse to be a partner, than to be an Actor, Numb. 27. 3.

3. Application.

1. *Information*: Is there such a thing, as partaking of other mens sins after this manner?

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1. Hence you may be informed of the Equity and Justice of Gods proceeding in punishment: You oft-times see God punishing one mans Sin upon another, or at least hear of it, and you think it strange: why this Oedipus will read you the Riddle. This Clue will conduct you through the labyrinth, They have been some way or other partakers of those Sins, either by contrivance, or by compliance, or by connivance, &c. one way or other, else God would never punish them, if they have not been *Authors*, they have been *Abettors*: Shall not the Judge of all the world do right? God punishes Children for the Sins of their Parents, Exod. 34. 7. Aye but those Children have been *unwitting*, partakers certainly, by approbation, it may be by imitation: God punishes servants for the Sins of their masters, Gen. 12. 17. But sure the servants were *unwitting*, partakers by consenting, it may be by executing: God punishes Wives for the Sins of their Husbands, Gen. 20. 18. but those Wives were *unwitting*, partakers still by admitting, by enduring: God punishes Ministers for the Sins of the people, Ezek. 33. 8. But then those Ministers are *unwitting*, partakers sure enough, by not instructing, by not reprovng; still the Justice of God is vindicated.

2. Hence be informed what piety, and strictness, and watchfulness, is more especially required of those that have the care of others, e.g. Kings and Parents, and Masters, and Magistrates, and Ministers; they should be exemplary in godliness: They have *curam animarum*, and therefore they should have *curam anime*; they have care of *other mens* souls, and therefore they should look well to their own. The want of this was her crime and complaint, Cant. 1. 6. They made me the Keeper of the Vineyards, but mine own Vineyard have I not kept. Oh those that are Keepers of Vineyards had need to have special care of their own Vineyard.

3. Hence take an account why the wicked of the world do so hate the godly, and reproach and revile them; it is this, They will not be partakers of their sins, they will not commit them, neither will they connive at them; and this is the reason why the world hates them: Abab hates Michaiab, and himself gives the reason, because he reprov'd him, 1 King. 22. 8. I hate him, he never speaks well of me. Herod hates John Baptist because he reproveth him. No wonder that ministers of all kind of men in the world are most hated; the case is plain, because they are reprovers. Godly ministers are wicked mens reprovers, and wicked men are Godly Ministers reproachers, 1 Pet. 4. 4. They think it strange you run not with them to the same excess of Riot, speaking evil of you.

4. Here is matter of reproof and humiliation this day for our want of watchfulness in this kind. Oh which of us can say, that we are free from the guilt of other mens sins. Every man may cast this bur of reproof and lamentation at his own Conscience, and there let it stick. Parents every one, ab my childrens sins; Masters, ab my servants sins; Ministers, ab my peoples sins; Rulers, ab my subjects sins. Oh let us deeply mourn for want of relative holiness, and more frequently and fervently pray that prayer, *Lord forgive me my other mens sins.*

2. The second Use is of Exhortation and Caution together. Is it so, That it ought to be every mans care, not to partake of any mans sin?

Oh Christians! let me intreat you then to be very mindful of this Duty; be perswaded, beloved, and the Lord perswade you to be tenderly careful and watchful, that you do not partake of other mens sins. These are infectious times and places that we live in, and multitudes there are that catch diseases and distempers from others; but let me tell you Christians, that bodily diseases are not half so catching as sin is; Sin is an infectious, contagious, pestilential plague, that spreads mightily in the world: Oh take heed, take heed that the guilt of other mens Sins do not one day lie upon your Conscience, and be put upon your account.

Let me enforce this counsel in the words of our Apostle here, and they are very weighty and Emphatical.

Verse 21. *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another; and amongst the rest this is one, That thou be not partaker of other mens sins.* Give me leave to prosecute this in these three particulars.

1. By laying down some Arguments to press this Caution and Exhortation.

2. By pointing at what sins especially you must not partake of.

3. By shewing you how you may so manage the business, and order the matter, as not to be partakers of other mens sins. What are the Antidotes against this infection.

1. To lay down the Arguments.

1. Consider, you have sins enough of your own, you have no reason to partake of other mens; it is cruel to add affliction to your bonds. Jesus Christ had no sins of his own, and therefore he could, and did bear ours; he did take all mens sins, though he did not partake of any mans sins, all were his by imputation, *Isa. 53. 6.* He beth laid upon him the iniquities of us all, but none were his by perpetration and participation.

tipitation. It is not so with us, alas! We have sins enough of our own; Man, Woman, thine own *pride* will damn thee, if thou dost not repent; and thine own *hypocrisie*, and *formality*, and *worldliness*, and *hardness* of heart; thou hast no need to take the sins of others; said the Daughter of *Zelophebad*, our *Father* died in his own sin, *Numb.* 27. 3. aye, that is enough to Kill a man, and Damn a man, *his own sin*.

2 Consider. *It is a most monstrous sin, it is a most Dreadful sin to partake of other mens sins.* The Apostle speaks of *committing iniquity with greediness*, *Ephes.* 4. 19. Sirs, there is no such greedy sinning as this, for a man to lick up, and swallow down, and devour other mens sins. *Naturalists* tell us, that *Serpens Serpentem devorans fit Draco*, If a Serpent swallow down another Serpent, it becomes a Dragon. Oh *Christians!* this sin of devouring other mens sins, is a *Dragon-sin*, a *Monstrous-sin*, a *Dreadful sin*, a *Devilish-sin*, and therefore take heed of it.

3. Consider, *If you partake of other mens sins, you shall certainly partake of other mens plagues*, *Rev.* 18. 4. *Come out of her my people*, says God, namely, from *Babylon*, *that you be not partakers of her sins, that so ye receive not of her plagues.* See *Prov.* 13. 20. *A companion of fools shall be destroyed*; not only fools shall be destroyed, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed: If you sin with them, you shall suffer with them, and you shall suffer more because of them. Read that, *Luk.* 16. 27, 28. *And the rich man said, I pray thee Father Abraham, that thou wouldest send Lazarus to my Fathers house, for I have five Brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of Torment.* Why would not he have his Brethren to come to hell to him? Divines determine, not out of any love to their souls, there is not that charity to be supposed in hell. Oh, but because the sight of them, and company of them, would increase his Torment. This will be the shrieking and howling in hell among damned souls one to another; oh woe-worth the day that ever I saw thy face, oh that ever I saw thy face! thou hast brought me hither, and thou hast brought me hither; and so they will torment one another to all eternity.

2. *What sins we must especially take heed of partaking of?*

Ans. Of all sin whatsoever, *1 Thes.* 5. 22. *Abstain from all appearance of evil*; but especially of three sorts of sins, which may be called *Epidemical Plagues*.

1. Church-sins, 2. National-sins, 3. Family sins. But I shall speak nothing of the first, but little of the second, and most to the third.

Laquitur Apostolus de peccatis in gravioribus civil; sed maximo qua publicum offendiculum pariunt. Est in loc.

Among

Among National sins, especially take heed of *Prophaneness*; this is obvious, this is an universal spreading plague, that is like to infect the whole Kingdom, if God does not in mercy prevent it. There is a deluge of prophaneness breaking in on every side, Swearing, Drinking, Whoring, Sabbath-breaking, Scoffing, and Mocking at Religion, all the Countries ring again. Men are now grown bold, and audacious, and incorrigible in their wickedness, that like a *Titan-brood* they even threaten Heaven it self with an over-daring impudence, as if they would storm the Palace of *Jehovah*, and pluck him out of his Throne. Oh take heed of partaking here!

2. *Family-sins*, we must have a care of partaking here, and so much the more watchful must we be, in that Family-sins of all sins are most catching and infectious; As it is with bodily diseases, if one be sick in an house, they of the blood, and kin, and family, are likeliest to catch the distemper, because of their frequent and intimate converse especially: So it is here, if there be any predominant lust lurking in a Family, all are apt to be infected with it, if they are not marvellous circumspect and watchful.

And therefore Parents, and Masters, and Governours of Families had need to be reformers both of themselves, and all under their charge; for besides, that this is the most compendious and safest way to State-Reformation, and Church-Retormation. Every Family being a kind of a little Kingdom of it self, and a little Church of it self, wherein the Master is both King, Priest, and Prophet; besides this, there is the sound of this Argument, and reason to allurum them (*viz*) as they desire to have their souls and consciences free from the guilt of other mens sins.

Plato seeing a child do mischief in the streets, went forthwith and corrected his Father for it; that Father that does not correct his child when he does amiss, is justly corrected for his faults, and it is the pattern of Gods judicial proceedings, as he visits the iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children, who imitate them: So he vilites the iniquities of the Children upon the Fathers, who countenance and indulge them. A *Jacob* was countable to *Laban* for the whole flock, not a Sheep or a Lamb lost or torn, but it was required at his hands, *Gen.* 31. 39. Thus must Family-Governours be accountable to God for every Lamb in the fold, for every Child in the Family, for every servant in the house, *Luke* 16. 2. Says God to him, Give an account of thy Stewardship, thou mayest be no longer Steward: So will God one day cry aloud in thine ears, *Quintili vare, redde legiones*, Husband, Father,

Philem. 2.

Col. 4. 15.

1 Cor. 6. 19.

Father, Master, Wife, give an account of thy Husbandship, and give an account of thy Fathership, give an account of thy Mastership, give an account of thy Wifeship, &c. This made *Josuah* undertake for his house, as well as for himself, *Josh. 24. 15.* And this made *David* careful of his house, as well as his heart, *Psalm. 101. 2. I will walk within mine house, with a perfect heart;* not only with a perfect heart, but in his house with a perfect heart, so as to reform his family, that that may be the Church of God, *Col. 4. 15.* as well as to reform himself, that he may be the Temple of God, *1 Cor. 3. 17.*

Ah how many Families are there whose houses are not the Church of God, but the Synagogue of Satan rather; God is not in all their thoughts, nor God is not in all their mouths, except it be in swearing and cursing, and blaspheming. Their Bellies are their god, and their lusts are their Lord. It is said of *Noahs Ark*, that it was pitcht within and without, *Gen. 6. 14.* Such (says one) is the condition of many a mans house, it is a *Noahs Ark*, it is pitcht within and without, nothing but the pollutions and defilements of sin in every room, and passage, and corner. Idleness stands at the door; Unconscionableness walks in the shop; Covetousness lurks in the counting-house; Luxury sits at the Table; Pride looks out at the window; Wantonness lodges in the bed; all pitchy and filthy both within and without.

And therefore Christians for the Lords sake, out with all this rubbish, if it should be found in your Families; How do you in London here delight to have your houses clean, and hereupon sweep them, and wash them, and rub them; oh that you would be as careful to cleanse your Families from sin, as you are to cleanse your houses from dirt; how soon would this great City become an Habitation of Righteousness, and a Mountain of Holiness; how would this Family-Reformation prevent the guilt of Family-sins, and keep out Family-distractions, and secure from Family-desolation. Therefore Sirs, set up Family-watchfulness, and Family-correction; let every house be an house of correction of it self; and set about Family-reading, and Family-conference, and Family-repetition, and especially Family-prayer. That all your houses may be like Gods house; you know his is called an house of Prayer, *Isa. 56. 7. Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people:* So should yours, they should be houses of prayer all of them; if they be not, let me tell you, they are no better then Dens of Thieves. Saith Christ, *Matth. 21. 13. My house shall be called an house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.* There is no Medium betwixt these two; if your houses be not houses of Prayer, they are certainly dens of Thieves; if you do.

do not pray to God for your mercies, before you receive them, and praise God for your mercies when you enjoy them, you do but rob God of his mercies: they are not given, but thrown, and snatched indeed, rather than received.

3. Now, and in the last place, we come to the *Antidotes*, How we must so carry it, and order the business, as not to partake of other mens sins.

Antidote 1. Exercise an holy jealousy over others (I am jealous over you, saith Paul) especially thy Relations; and this is the way to deliver thy soul from their sins. Job sacrificing for his children, said, *It may be they have sinned, Job 1. 5.*

Antid. 2. Watch against the sins of others, have your eyes about you: take heed of contriving, complying, winking at them, if it be in your power, take heed of suffering them. See Davids paroxysm of zeal in this case, *Psal. 101. 2. &c.*

This is the direction in the Text, which must not be omitted; Keep thy self pure, take heed of infectious places, and infectious practices, and infectious company.

Antid. 3. Pray against them, pray against profaneness, pray *Augustines* prayer, *Lord deliver me from other mens sins.*

Antid. 4. Mourn for them; mourn for the sins of the Nation, and mourn for the sins of thy Relations; for the sins of thy Brethren in their obstinacy, that they will not be reformed: Christ came to sinful Jerusalem with weeping eyes, and with a mourning heart, oh Jerusalem! David mourned for the wickedness of the times that he saw, *Psal. 119. 136.* Many walk, says Paul, of whom I tell you weeping. Thus did Gods people of old free themselves from National sins, and particular mens sins. When they could not be reformers they turned mourners, *Jer. 13. 17.* And see how prevalent this is with God, these mourners are the only people to deliver a Nation, or at least to deliver themselves from the sin and plagues of a Nation, when God makes an overflowing scourge to pass through, *Ezek. 9. 4.* On the other side, not mourning for the sins of others, makes us adopt, and espouse the sins of others. *Dan. 5. 22.*

Antid. 5. Reprove them. *Ezek. 3. 17, 18, 19.* If we would not partake of the sins of others, we must reprove the sins of others, *Lev. 19. Ezek. 33. 7, 8, 9.* So the Apostle saith expressly, *Ephes. 5. 11.* intimating that you do certainly approve them, if you do not reprove them. Reprove Heresie, Blasphemy, Drunkenness, Oaths, Sabbath-breaking, Uncleaness, and every sin you hear or see committed.

The Raviſht Virgin under the Law, *Dent. 22. 25.* was to cry out; in this caſe God takes ſilence for conſent. As there is a holy ſilence to Gods Correction, *Aaron* held his peace; ſo there is a ſilential ſilence under mans corruption, *Eli* held his peace alſo; *Aaron's* ſilence was a good ſilence, but *Ely's* ſilence was a naughty ſilence; we muſt be ſilent under Gods correction, but we muſt not be ſilent under mans corruption, *Leuiticus 5. 1.* Therefore ſaith Saint *Paul*, Reprove them; the beſt way to avoid fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, and to free a mans ſoul from the guilt of other mens ſins, is to reprove them, that is the Antidote againſt this infection. Thus the *Ephesians* practiſed as Saint *Paul* preachd. Saint *Paul* does not more adviſe them to this duty, than Saint *John* does commend them for this duty. Says the Holy Ghoſt there in *Apoc. 2. 1, 2, 3.* compared together——haſt born, and yet haſt not born——Gods Correction——mans corruption. I know thy patience, and how thou canſt not ——it is no breach of patience to be impatient againſt ſin, and ſinners. But now beloved, becauſe this ſword of Reproof is a very dangerous weapon, if it be not rightly handled, an edge-tool that we muſt be marvellouſly chary how we meddle with; There is required therefore a great deal of ſkill, and prudence, and wiſdom, and watchfulneſs, to a right and ſucceſſful managing of this duty, *Eccleſiaſt. 12. 11.* He that would faſten this nail of Reproof, in the conſcience of his offending Brother, had need be a very wiſe man. Yea, as I remember, *Iſhod. Peluſ. τὸ μὴ ἐμπιμπῆν πᾶν*. Every one can find fault, and reprove another for the ſame, but to do it diſcreetly and ſeaſonably, and ſucceſſfully requires a great deal of wiſdom; and to this end I ſhall give you theſe Rules. Reproof is double.

1. Miniſterial, and by way of Authority, and Fraternal, by way of Charity.

And here we come to the ſecond caſe, viz. Reproof 1. He that reproves another, muſt be very careful that himſelf be faultleſs and blameleſs, as much as may be; otherwiſe he is not acting his Charity, but bewraying his Hypocriſie. Thou that teacheſt another —— *Rom. 2. 21, 22.* This is Hypocriſie, ſaith Chriſt, *Mat. 7. 3, 4, 5.* —— And here there are two things cougnt in this;

1. A man muſt be faultleſs in reference to ſin in general, as much as may be, that will reprove another. The ſnuffers of the Sanctuary under the Law were of pure gold, and it behoves that man, that will be a ſnuffer in Gods houſe, to correct others, to amend others, and reprove others; to be very upright and circumspect in all things, and then he may

may admonish with the greater advantage, Authority, Efficacy. Let the Righteous smite me, saith David, &c. Plal. 141. 5. A man of a strict and severe life, and religious and righteous conversation, carries a kind of a Majesty and Authority along with him, at which the guilty consciences of guilty sinners cannot but recoil, as Herod did to John Baptist, Mar. 6. 20. — Though John had reprov'd him, and touch'd him to the quick, v. 18. And then

2. *A man must be blameless in reference to that sin he reproveth especially;* else, in healing his Brother, he doth but stab himself; if thou reprovest Pride in others, and art proud thy self; *Covetousness*, and art covetous thy self; *Drunkennes*, and art a drunkard thy self, thou dost but like David in Nathans Parable, pronounce the sentence of thine own condemnation; Rom. 2. 1. But here I must enter one Caution, None is exempted from this duty for unfitness; no, this thou oughtest to have done, and not to have left the other undone.

2. — *As he must take heed that himself be faultless, so he must be sure that his Brother be faulty;* For otherwise it is not to reprove him, but to reproach him; and so instead of doing a Christian duty, a man commits a devilish sin; he becomes an accuser of the Brethren, instead of a Reprover of the Brethren, Gal. 2. 11. And here are likewise two things considerable:

1. It must be a truth that thou reprovest him for.

2. It must be a sin that thou reprovest him for.

1. It must not be a conjecture, or imagination, or jealousy, or rumor, or hear-say that's ground sufficient for Reproof: for all these may be false, and the Rule of Charity is, *quisque presumitur esse bonus nisi constet de malo* — but verily the guile of the world is far otherwise; we deal with our Brethren as the persecuting Pagans did with the Primitive Christians, put them into Lions skins, and into Bear skins, and then bait them, and tear them to pieces. Alas! the poor Christians were harmless, meek Lambs, but they disguis'd them, and so abused them. Thus 'tis now, Christians are apt and ready to put their poor Brethren into I know not what kind of monstrous ugly shapes, of their own imagining, and devising, or else of other mens traducing and reporting, and without more ado, they fall foul upon them; This is not to imitate our Saviour, Isa. 11. 2, 3, 4. — Not from rumors — but with righteousness and equity; as God said in destroying of Sodom, so should we say in reprov'ing our Brethren, Gen. 18. 21. *I will go down and see.*

2. It must be a breach of some command Affirmative or Negative, directly, or reductively; either the omission of that which is good,

or the commission of that which is evil; — we must be *Cato's*, — not *Memius's*. — As the Pharisees, to Christ, *Mat. 19. 3*. So here, is it lawful to reprove a man for every cause? no, the Disciples were quite out in reproving the children for coming to Christ in this chapter when it was not their sin, but their duty, *ver. 13, 14*. Quakers make a stir about Cuffs, and Bands, and Ribbons, and Laces, and such like minute trifles of Pharisaical Humility; if they can prove these sins, let them reprove them in Gods Name; but if they are indifferent things, it is censoriousness, uncharitableness, and pragmatism to rail at them, and not Christian Reproof.

3. — He must manage his Reproof to sincere ends; must take heed that his aims and intentions be upright and honest in reproving. Take heed of mingling any wild-fire of pride, and vain-glory, and ambitious humour of contradicting and controuling others, with thy zeal of reproving; This heat must be holy heat, a fire of the Sanctuary as free from the smoak of by-ends, and self-interest, as may be, purely for Gods glory, and out of hatred unto sin, and out of love to the salvation of thy Brothers soul. *Diogenes* (it is storied) reprov'd *Plato's* pride, by trampling upon his Velvet Chair, and Cushion, but says the Author, *Majori fastu superbum Platonem Diogenes superbior*.

4. He must manage his Reproof in fit season; There is a time to speak, and a time to be silent; Reproof is a duty grounded upon an Affirmative Precept. Now 'tis well observed by Divines, that Affirmative Precepts bind *semper*, but not *ad semper*; we must always reprove, but we must not reprove always; it is a constant duty, but it must be done in a seasonable opportunity. There are certain *mollia fandi Tempora*, words upon the wheels, as *Solomon* calls them, that are like Apples of Gold; and let me tell you Christians, one word spoken in season, is worth a thousand other words. Now it is impossible to define and determine all the nicks of time wherein a man should strike in with a Reproof; for this must be left to the wisdom and experience of every Christian, that makes it his business to be his Brothers keeper; and let him assure himself, he must expect to lose many an admonition, shoot many an Arrow of Reproof, as *Jonathan* did his, under and over, on this side and another side, before he hit the mark.

Rules.

1. He must take a season wherein the offender is capable of Reproof. If a man be drunk, we must stay till he be sober, as *Abigail*,
1 Sam.

1 Sam. 25. 36, 37. — So if a man be all in a heat of passion, we must stay, and come to him; as God did to *Adam*, in the cool of the day, when the fit was over.

2. *We must take a season wherein we have occasion to commend a man for his virtues*, and then rub him up for his faults, Sir you are thus and thus, oh but if you would but mend this and that, how excellent it would be! So St. Paul, 1 Cor. 11. 2. 17.

3. *We must do it as soon as ever we can.* and the sooner the better; a green wound is easier healed than an old sore, Lev. 19. 17.

4. *If we have long waited for fit seasons*, and yet cannot find them, you had better make a breach upon ones prudence, than ones conscience; discretion then must give place to necessity, out with it, and leave the success to God.

5. *He must manage his Reproof with due conditions and qualifications.* And beloved there are seven properties of that Reproof that will in all likelihood both benefit and better our Brother, and also secure ourselves from participation of his sins.

1. *We must reprove seriously and in good earnest*, so as to knock the nail up to the head in the conscience of the sinner, Psal. 50. 21. — So should we in our Reproofs, of our Brother, charge him home, these things hast thou done, there is no denying; thou art the man, says *Nathan* to *David*; before he was in his parable, but now he speaks plain English, as we say. — *This Jesus whom ye have crucified*, says *Peter* to the *Jews*, and thus we should set things in order before him. Sir, is not this and that highly to dishonour God, and to crack your credit, and to shame your profession, and to impair your body, and to waste your estate, and to wound your conscience, and to damn your precious and immortal soul? and therefore for the Lords sake think on it, and amend it. A loose and squibbing kind of Reproof is like an *ignis Lambens*, as soon off as on, and does the man more hurt than good. As *Elies* careless and loose reproving of his leud Sons, did rather harden them in their villany, than any way reform them. As it is with weak Physick administred to a sick man, it doth only stir the humours, but not purge them away, it leaves the body in a greater and worse distemper than it was before. So 'tis here, — therefore says the Apostle, *Tim. 1. 13. ἀποτρέπει* — cuttingly. A finger that is but just prickt, and no more, it is apt to wranckle and fester, and be worle, but let it bleed, and there is no danger, it will then soon be healed.

2. *We must Reprove impartially, and without respect of Persons.* Good men,

men, if they miscarry, must be reprov'd as well as bad men. If *Peter* temporize, *Paul* will not spare him, nor *Barnaby* neither, they shall hear on't, *Gal. 2*. Again, great men, be they never so great, they should be admonish'd as well as others, so long as they are under the great God, and subject to great failings and miscarriages; Kings, and Nobles, and Magistrates, as well as meaner and inferiour persons. *Nathan* reprov'd *David*, though a King; and so did *Elijah*, *Ahab*; and *Nebemias* reprov'd the Nobles, and Rulers for Usury, and Sabbath-prophanation. Certainly, if any be fit to teach great men, they are as fit to reprove them, for both must go together, *2 Tim. 4. 2*. That's but a drone-like Preaching, that hath lost the sting of Reproving. It is the great unhappiness of Princes and Nobles that they have so many flatterers about them, and so few Reprovers. *Carneades* in *Plutarch* was wont to say, that great mens Sons learned nothing well, but to ride horses; for men would be sure to flatter them; If they run, they would lag behind, that they might out-run them; if they wrestled, they would fall on purpose, that they might seem to cast them, &c. But a Horse not knowing a Prince from a Peasant, would down with him if he could not rule him. Just so 'tis now, let great men do what they will, both against Scripture, and Reason, and Law, and Conscience, they will not want their Parasites, both to encourage them, and applaud them: If there be not a Law for *Cambyses* to marry his Sister, tush, what of that, there is a Law for *Cambyses* to do what he pleases; and thus men out of cowardize, and fear of frowns, and wrath, dare not reprove guilty Greatness. Oh but if a man be a faithful Monitor, he must be impartial in his reproofs. *Agag* must be reprov'd as well as the poorest *Amalekite*; and the Mountains must be touch'd, let them sinoak and fume never so furiously, to allude to that place, *Psal. 144. 5*. This made that excellent Emperour *Theodosius* so much esteem *Ambrose*, viz. that he durst, and would, out of the sense of his duty, reprove even the highest and proudest.

Ambrosium ob hoc dignum Episcopi nomine solum novi; but here humility must be used.

3. We must reprove discreetly, making a difference between man and man; For though it's true, that all are to be reprov'd, that are offenders, especially within the Pale of the Church, *1 Cor. 5. 12*. Except they be scorners, which Christ calls Dogs and Swine, *Mat. 7. 6*. and obstinate Hereticks, *Tit. 3. 10*. yet all must not be handled in the same manner; Some will do more with a Rod, than others will do with a Scorpion. A Glass is not to be handled so roughly as a Brazen Vessel;

Vessel; this Rule St. Jude gives, ver. 22, 23.—Some must be dealt withall with lenitives, others with corrosives; some gently reprov'd, others sharply rebuked, according to the tenderness or stubbornness of their disposition, or according to the nature and quality of their offences; and here abundance of Rules might be laid down about publick, private, great, small, seldom, or frequent offences. In one word, a Reprover must be like the Thrasher, that the Prophet describes, as one says, *Isa. 28. 27, 28.*

4. *We must reprove compassionately, with the deepest sense of our own failings, and miscarriages, and so with the greater pity to their infirmities, Gal. 6. 1.* Bernard said of himself, That he never saw another man sin, but he was distrustful and jealous of his own heart, *ille veri, & tu hodie, & ego cras*——and this would file off a great deal of that rigor and roughness that renders a Reproof so unpleasing, and so unprofitable; for verily Christian tenderness and compassion in the Reprover, is the best way to work sense and passion in the sinner; *Si vis me flere dolendum est primum ipse tibi.*

This is the way to mollifie mens hearts, whereas by a lordly, domineering, austere, rigid Reproof, instead of rendring thy Brother Gods friend, thou dost but render thy self his enemy, *Jam. 1. 20.*

5. *We must reprove charitably, with the greatist love to mens persons, even then, when we shew the greatest zeal against their sins; for it is one thing to be angry with the sins, and another with his person; therefore we should consult our Brothers credit, and esteem, and honour, and person, while we stab his sin; and not (as one said well) in healing a wound in his conscience and conversation, to leave a skar of reproach upon his person, and a brand of shame and ignominy upon his Name; that were to do the work of an enemy under the vizard of a friend. And thus I remember the Jews generally interpret that Law, Lev. 19. 17.—that is, say the Talmudists and Gemarists, Thou shalt rebuke thy Brother so, as to reform him, but thou shalt not rebuke thy Brother so, as to shame him; thou shalt rebuke him in love and lenity, he that shames his Brother by rebuking him, bears his sin; nay, say they, he that shames his Brother, shall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: Their meaning is, unless the fault be notorious, and publick, and scandalous, for then they may shame him. I speak it to your shame, saith Paul.*

6. *We must reprove meekly, not in rage, and passion, and bitterness, but in meekness, and sweetness of spirit, this Rule the Apostle gives, 2 Tim. 2. 25.* Though there may be some warmth in a Reproof, so as to

fetch off the hair, yet it must not be scalding hot, so as to fetch off the skin. *Elijah* did that with a kiss, which his man could not do with a staff: Beloved, when a kiss will do better——oh take heed of carrying your Teeth in your Tongues; Take soft words and hard Arguments to convince gain-sayers; and so gentle reproofs, and solid reasons, to reduce offenders.

7. *We must reprove Scripturally*: My meaning is, as near as we can to reprove our Brethren in Scripture-text, and Scripture-language, that so it may not seem to be we that speak, so much as the Spirit of our Father that speaks in us; and this is to reprove with authority, *Tit. 2. 15*. What greater Authority and Majesty wherewith to awaken the conscience of a sinner than the Word of God, by which he should be ruled, and by which he must certainly be judged.

Know Reader, That God took the Author to Glory, before he could finish this Sermon. for the Preſs.

What

What Means may be used towards the Conversion of our Carnal Relations?

Rom. 10. 1.

Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel, is, that they might be saved.



His Noble Argumentative Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Romans, was written and dated at Corinth, when he was now even ready to set sail for Jerusalem, as the Messenger of the Churches, to convey thither the Collections of Macedonia, and other places in Greece made for the poor Saints of Judea; as appears by the 15th Chapter of this Epistle, [But

Rom. 15. 25.
26.

now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the Saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia, to make a certain contribution for the poor Saints which are at Jerusalem.] It being supposed to be the same journey which is mentioned in the twentieth and one and twentieth Chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

Act. 20. 3.
& 21. 3, &c.

The time of the penning this Epistle, some place in the 14th year of Claudius the Emperor, some in the second, some in the sixth, some in the eighth of Nero. 'Tis at present impertinent to decide that Chronological controverſie.

Capellus in
bist. Apostolic
p. 76.
Calovs. Vsser
Param.

It consists principally of two parts; the first Doctrinal, the second Hortatory.

The Doctrinal part spends its strength upon the great point of Justification by Faith, and its glorious effects. Unto which our Apostle doth annex a notable discourse of the abstruse Mystery of Predestination, from the beginning of the ninth, to the end of the eleventh Chapter; and therein takes occasion to speak of that doleful Bill of Divorce

which God had given to the Jewish Nation. He treats likewise of the Calling and Fulness of the Gentiles; and the Restauration of Israel in the latter daies.

In each of these three Chapters he sadly bewails the deplorable state of his own kindred, and by all the evincing Arguments possible, labours for their conversion to the Faith.

To cut off any further Prologue; In the beginning of this tenth Chapter, he pours out his longings after their Salvation.

In the first verse whereof, be pleased to observe these four parts.

1. Pauls holy groans and prayers [*my hearts desire and prayer to God*] *ἐνδοξία τῆς ἡμῶν καρδίας*; The good will, the hearty wilhes, desires and pantings of my soul. He lays open the greatest earnestness of his Spirit,

Chrysost. in loc. [*ἐνδοξία, τὴν σπουδὴν ἐνθυμίας φωνὴν πικρὰν τὴν σπουδὴν πνεύματος, &c.*] By this his desire we are to understand a marvellous strong intention of spirit, and an earnest study and endeavour after accomplishment. *Hesy-*

chius expounds the term by βύβου, θέλειν, ἀγαπᾶν, to will, desire, wish, love and delight in the work. He wills it, not only as a possible atchievement, but as amiable, he endeavours to compass it by all good means, because he proposes so desirable an end. The sincerity of our desires in obtaining of possible designs, is manifested by our diligent endeavours in the use of proper ways to effect them. [*ἐνδοξία τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἡμῶν, ἡδ' ἐνθυμίας αἷς ἐν πολλοῖς*]

Arist. Rhet. l. 2. c. 19. For the most part (says the Philosopher) no man delights in, or bankers after impossibilities. No rational man certainly.

And therefore we are to conceive, that our Apostle doth here under his importunate desires, couch and imply all holy means to accomplish his end. Upon which account he presently subjoyns [*ἀκούω πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*] his prayer to God for that purpose: of which afterwards. Only at present observe from the connexion of his prayers to his hearty desires; That lively are those prayers which flow from the heart. Most harmonious in the ears of God are those groans, that mount up to Heaven upon the wings of ardent emanations, out of the depth of our hearts. *Suspensio ē sulco pectoris ducta.* When the words of our petitions ascend warm and reeking out of our bowels, when every expression is dipt in our heart blood.

2. The persons that were the subject of his prayers and desires: For Israel. And here it is considerable in what relation Israel stood to the blessed Apostle. They were his Brethren, his Kinsmen according to the Flesh. For I also (saith Paul) am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the Tribe of Benjamin. In another place he acquaints us, that he was circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin,

Rom. 9. 3.

Rom. 11. 1.

Phil. 3. 5.

Acts 23. 6.

jamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, (i. e. both by Father and Mother) # 2 Cor. 11. 22, touching the Law a Pharisee. It appears thence, that the Israelites were his kindred, his own dear and near relations; remaining for the most part in a state of ignorance, as to the *Messiah*, and of alienation and estrangement from the Covenant of Grace, and the mystery of the Promise through Faith in the blood of a Mediator. For these it is, that our Apostle groans; for these he is so ardent in prayer; for these he pours out such earnest petitions to the Father.

3. The great scope and design of the Apostle for his kindred and relations according to the flesh, in all his desires, endeavours, prayers was [*his earnest*] *That they might be saved.* The earnest solicitude of his spirit, the fervent petitions poured out into the Divine bosom, did all combine in this, that his natural might become spiritual relations; that his kindred of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, might through union to Christ, be allied to him in the Tribe of *Judah*. What is natural to animals and plants [*τοῖς ἰσθμοῖς, τῶν αὐτῶν, τοῖς κατὰ φύσιν ὅμοιαι*] to thirst after an impression of their own likeness upon another; is much more longed for by the Saints, that others might be holy and happy, as well as themselves, but especially such as are nearest to them by the bonds of nature. Holy Paul doth not press after outward enjoyments, as health, strength, riches, power, or dominion in the world; that *Israel* might have prosperity and plenty in their Streets and Palaces, or that the Kingdom should be restored to them from the *Romans*: Not the great things of the Earth, but the greater of Heaven: This his soul travels with, that Christ might be formed in them, and dwell in their hearts by Faith, that so *Israel* might be saved.

4. In these words we may observe likewise the kind compellation, wherewith our Apostle doth salute the Saints at *Rome*, to whom he wrote this Epistle, by the name of *Brethren*. Now, though he wrote to the *Gentiles*, yet he lets them know, that his bowels did yearn over his poor kindred, *that they also might be saved.* The reason why in this Letter to the *Romans* he doth so pathetically mention these his desires, with such strong and vehement asseverations, is, because there were great numbers of the *Jews* at *Rome*, and principally of the two Tribes that returned out of the *Babylonian Captivity*; who after the Wars of *Pompey*, and other *Roman* Generals and Captains in *Judea*, were very many of them transplanted into *Italy*: Which is not only attested by Civil and Ecclesiastical Historians; but also by Scripture it self, declaring that there was a solemn Convocation of the *Jews* assembled by Paul at his arrival. To whom the Apostle did first preach the

the Gospel, and related the story of his coming to that Imperial City, by reason of his appeal to *Cesar*.

From all these parts laid down together, there results this Doctrinal Conclusion.

Obsev. *That to endeavour the conversion and salvation of our near relations, is a most important duty.*

- The president and example of our holy Apostle compared with, and confirmed by other Scriptures, will notably evince the truth of this assertion. *The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall.* One great end, why God bestows the graces of his Spirit upon us, is, that we should spend the savour thereof upon others. Our discourse must be seasoned with the salt of grace, that it may minister edification to others. Our speech should never overflow in abundance, but like the waters of *Nilus*, to render the neighbouring Plantations fruitful. Grace is sometimes compared to *Light*, by reason of its diffusive nature; that our shining conversations might illustrate others in the paths of Truth and Holiness. Sometimes Grace is likened to *Spikenard*, to *perfumed ointment*, which must not be shut up in a box, though of purest *Alabaster*, but opened, that the whole house may be filled with the fragrant odour thereof. To *Oyl*, to the costly sacred Oyl that ran down not only upon the beard of *Aaron*, but to the skirts of his garments. To *Talents*, which must be industriously traded with, and not laid up in napkins. To *Dews, Showers, Waters*, because of their fructifying virtue. To a *generative Principle*, because of its begetting power and influence. We are therefore commanded, exhorted, directed to edify one another, to *exhort* one another, to *admonish* one another, to *turn* one another, as that phrase in *Ezekiel* seems to import [*& converti facite*] and make others to be converted as well as our selves; to provoke one another to love and to good works. When converted, we are enjoined to strengthen our Brethren, that we may save their souls from death, and hide a multitude of sins.
- 1 Cor. 12. 7.
Col. 4. 6.
Eph. 4. 29.
Cant. 1. 12.
Prov. 27. 9.
John 12. 3.
Psal. 133. 2.
1 Thes. 5. 11.
Rom. 14. 19.
Heb. 3. 13.
Col. 3. 16.
וְהוֹדִיעוּ
Ezek. 18. 30.
Heb. 10. 24.
Jam. 5. 20.

Now the principal Objects of this excellent duty are such with whom we converse; such to whom we are obliged and connexed by the bonds and links of nature, office, or vicinity of habitation.

Hence was it that our blessed Lord, while he walked in the valley of his Incarnation, exercised his Ministry most part among his kinred, relations, and neighbours; at *Nazareth, Capernaum, Bethsaida*, near the Sea of *Tiberias*, at *Cana*, and other Regions of *Galilee*, in which parts he had received his Education. *Andrew* when he understood the call of Christ, the great Saviour of the world, he presently seeks

Joh. 1. 41.

out

out his Brother *Simon* to bring him to the *Messiah*. *Philip* after the like manifestation, looks out for *Nathaniel*, and in a great extasie of spirit, cries out [*ὤψακα, ὤψακα,*] *We have found him of whom Moses* John 1. 45, *and the Prophets did write.* There are many instances of this nature both in the Old and New Testament. *Abraham* and *Joshua* were famous in their Generations for this work; they counted it their principal business, they made it their great care to instruct their Families in the fear and service of the great God. *David* also ingages to walk in his house with a perfect heart, that by his exemplary pattern he might gain over his Family to the Lord. *Matthew* the Publican (we read) did invite all the Tribute-gatherers that were of his own Fraternity and Profession, to a great Feast, that they might sit down with Christ, and feed upon his heavenly Doctrine. The great man in the City of *Capernaum* brings in his whole Family to the belief of the Truth. *Cornelius* the Roman Centurion, who was quartered at *Cæsarea*, calls his Relations together, to hear the Doctrine of Faith and Repentance. The woman in the Gospel having found the lost groat, after great pains and diligence, calls in her friends and neighbours to rejoyce with her. *Crispus* and the *Jaylor*, and *Lydia*, and *Stephanas*, are eminent Examples of this duty; by whose conscientious care and procurement, it may be supposed, that their whole households came under the roof of Christ; because presently after that we have heard of their own personal Baptism, we find their Families also washed in that sacred Laver.

I shall not insist upon Arguments, to prove the incumbent necessity of this duty, or Motives to allure you to the practice of it: I might deduce it as an inference consequent from the Law of Nature, to use our greatest endeavours that our Relations might obtain an union to the best and highest good. I might draw it from the Divine Injunction. I might excite your diligence from the consideration of the dreadful danger following its neglect; from the comfort that will flow into thy bosom upon the exercise of it, since it is a notable evidence of the sincerity of Grace in thine own heart. None but such as have seen and tasted, can cry out to others with an holy affectionate vehemency. O come taste and see that the Lord is good! The Wine of the Kingdom having once warmed the hearts of Saints, sends up vivacious spirits, and fills their mouths with a holy loquacity. I might further provoke thee to this excellent work, by the rich benefit in gaining such to love thee, whose affections will exceed all natural love whatever, and by the great reward that shall ensue in the life to come. For

160y

Dan. 12. 3. *they that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.*

O Brethren, if Families were holy, then Cities, then Nations would quickly prove Mountains of Holiness, and Seats for the Throne of God. We are apt to cry out of bad times; Alas, those unclean Nests of ungodly Families have been the causes of all the wickedness in all Ages and Generations to this day. Therefore whoever thou art, on whom the Grace of God hath shined, study that holy art of Divine Reflection, and Re-percussion of that light on others hearts, which brings me to an useful and practical question.

Quest. You'll say, What course shall we take, what means shall we use, what method will you prescribe, that we may be able to manage this important and weighty duty; that we may be helpful towards the conversion and salvation of our near Relations that are in the state of nature?

I confess this Question is of grand importance, and being properly solved, may prove of great influence in all places where we are cast by Divine Providence. There is scarce a family, scarce a person living, who may not be comprehended within the verge and limits of this discourse.

Ans. In answer therefore to it, I shall spend the principal part of my time, and that I may handle it the more distinctly; I shall rank such as may desire satisfaction and direction in this weighty and excellent case under three forms or orders: Such as are either Superiours, Equals, or Inferiours. But before I enter into the main body of the Answer, I shall crave leave to premise three things.

1. That this Question is not to be understood of persons in public capacity and concernment, as Magistrates or Ministers; but of Family-Relations, Kindred Co-habitants, Neighbours, Friends, and Acquaintants, of such as have frequent converse together in Civil Societies, and often commerce in dealings; but principally of Oeconomical Relatives, or such as are nigh to each other by blood or affinity.

2. That Saving-Conversion is in the power of God alone to effect, as being the primary and principal efficient cause of all those gracious works that accompany salvation. There is none able to kindle Grace in the heart, but he who hath his fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem. Yet notwithstanding all of us in our several stations, as subordinate instruments, may and must use all wholesom means that are of Divine Appointment, conducing to such a blessed end.

3. That

3. That there are different states, conditions, capacities, and qualifications among such Relations, whose conversion we should endeavour. Some being perhaps enormously and outrageously wicked; others morally civil; and yet further, others possibly may be conformable to the institutions of the external worship of God. Of these I may speak. [*Sparsim, opere intertexto*] as the particulars will bear, together with such other appendant cases that may hold some consanguinity with the general Question.

To begin then with the first branch.

Quest. I. *What means Superiors (principally in Family relations) should use to draw on their inferiours to relish and savour the things of God?*

True it is what *Jerom* says. [*fiant, non nascuntur Christiani*] No man is born a Christian, but an heir of wrath and Divine justice. For the obtaining of the New birth then, in such as are committed to our charge, I shall draw up directions under twelve heads. Some whereof, though usual and obvious, in such as treat upon Oeconomical duties, yet being further improved, may by no means be here past by in silence, since they are exceeding useful, and no less practical than others. Most men under the Gospel perish for want of practising known Duties; wherefore let me beg of thee, O Christian, that every prescription may be duly weighed, and conscientiously improved, so shalt thou not doubt of admirable success through Divine assistance.

Hieronym. ad Letam. Tom. 1. p. 55. edit. Lugd. 1530.

1. In the first place, Preserve and uphold the honour and preheminance of that station wherein God hath set you, by all prudent means. The Prophet bewails those times wherein the Child shall behave himself proudly against the Ancient, and the base against the honourable. Distance of years calls for distance of deportment. A Father may challenge honour and reverence; a Master his due fear and subjection from his servant. What is duty in the inferiour to yield, is prudence in the superiour to maintain. It is therefore wisely advis'd by the Philosopher, that no persons should marry over-early [*λίαν πρότερον εἶναι πολλὸν ἔχει δυσέρεσθαι ὅτε καὶ αἰδώς ἥτιον ὑπάρχει τοῖς ταῦτοις ὥσπερ ἡλικιώταις καὶ περὶ τὴν οἰκονομίαν ἐγκληματικὴν τὴν παράγγωγον*]

Arist. Pol. l. 7. c. 16.

For if Parents and Children prove too near in age, there may follow great inconveniencies; In that, too much propinquity of years diminisheth reverence in children, and oftentimes produces contentions in the management of Family-affairs. Let such a distance be preserved, as may obtain the effectual issue of that counsel which *Jerom* gives to *Gaudensius* about the education of *Petrulus* [*Materis nutum*]

Hieronym. ad Gaudens. Tom. 1 p. 104.

pro verbis ac monitis et pro imperio habeat. Amat ut Parentem, subji-
tur ut Domine, timeat ut Magistrum. Let the Child esteem the nod of
 her mother in lieu of words, admonitions, and commands; let the Mo-
 ther beloved as a Parent, subjected to as a Lady, feared as a Mistress.]
 Condescension to mean, sordid, and contemptible actions, draws
 scorn and disdain upon superiours. As reverence and obedience is in-
 joynd to inferiours; so Rulers should manage and order their actions
 with such gravity and sobriety before them, as may gain some awe and
 respect from their hearts. No wonder, if that Ruler be contemned
 and slighted, who disgraceth himself. Some are apt to count it a
 piece of gracious humility and lowliness of spirit; but they are great-
 ly mistaken: It argues rather a base, low, degenerate temper. Be
 as humble before God, as reverential to Rulers, as affable to Equals
 as thou canst; but ever remember to maintain the eminency of thy
 place above inferiours. It is not heavenly, no nor moral wisdom, to
 entertain discourse of trivial and frivolous matters, with those that are
 under your inspection and government. Let converse with inferiours
 be spent, not upon superfluous, but necessary subjects. It is a good
 precept of the *Stoick*, to abstain from moving of laughter by jests among
 familiars, for it will have that influence [*τὸν αἰδῶ τῶν πρὸς εἰ ἀνιδναί*]
 to lessen their reverence towards thee. There is a great deal of reve-
 rence to be manifested by Superiours towards Youth; if they would che-
 rish and preserve that due reverence which ought to be in the hearts of
 young ones towards themselves. And yet notwithstanding, you must not
 carry yourselves with any proud, supercilious, or fastuous deportment;
 your countenance, though grave, yet must not be stern. As you need
 not indent your cheeks with continual smiles, so neither to plow your
 fore-heads with rough and sowre wrinkles. A sober affability, an unaf-
 fected and amiable gravity will sufficiently chastise contempt, and
 nourish a reverent love. Rigid austerity in words and actions will
 produce a slavish dispirited temper in children and servants; that when
 they come to years they prove either more difficult to please than their
 Fathers before them, or else so pusillanimous, that they are rendred
 unfit to manage the work of their Generation among whom they con-
 verse. It is a maxim of Plato [*σφοδρὰ καὶ ἄγρια δόξασι ταυτοὺς καὶ*
ἀνελαιθεροὺς καὶ μισανθρώπους, &c. ἐπιτελεῖ] that over-much rustick sla-
 very renders them dejected, illiberal, and haters of mankind. Car-
 ry your selves therefore in that manner, that they may neither fear or
 hate your morosity, nor grow wanton upon the commonness and supi-
 nity of your carriage. If inferiours repute their Rulers not wise enough

Epiſt. c. 54.

Maxima debe-
tur pueris re-
verentia.
ἡ μέλλει
αἰσχροῦ
συντὸν Py-
thag. ant. serm.

Plato de leg. l.
7. Tom. 2. p. 791
Ed. H. Steph.

to govern them; all their instructions will fall to the ground [*Regimen Salomon. de esse non potest, nisi fuerit iugiter in rectore iudicium*] Judgment and Prudence in a Ruler, is the foundation of the consistency of Government. *Gub. Dei l. 1. p. 20. Ed. Oxon.*

2. Be frequent, and pithy, and clear, in Family instruction. Nature without Moral discipline is blind, could a Heathen say. Without Heavenly instruction it's sealed up to Eternal darkness. We are all like Barren-heaths, and Stony-deserts by nature: Instruction is the culture and improvement of the soul. 'Tis observed by Naturalists, that Bees do [*βεχχίαν λίδον ἐν τοῖς πονοῖ κομίζου*] carry small gravel in their feet, to poize their little bodies through the stormy winds. Such are instructions to the floating and wavering minds of youth. The keel of their weak judgments would soon over-set without the ballast of Discipline; their conversations would soon prove unfruitful, or over-spread with the rampant briars of vice and sin, unless well manured and laboured upon, and moistned with the sweet showers of parental teachings. Wherefore all inferiours are by God referred to their Rulers, that they may drink in the soul-refreshing dews of prudent precepts. Even women are commanded to learn in silence, with all subjection, *γυναῖκ ἀκούτω ὡς τὸ θεοῦ*; Silence is a womans ornament, as a great Master of wisdom hath observed, Their ears should be more exercised than their tongues. If they will learn any thing, let them ask their Husbands at home; who are commanded to dwell with them according to knowledg. As for servants and children, the case is more evident and clear: But in all your instructions, have a care of tedious prolixity; make up the shortness of your discourse by frequency. Thou art enjoyned to talk of Gods precepts, when thou sittest in thine house, when thou walkst by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. A little now, and a little then. When thou wouldst accustom a child to any useful quality, begin betimes, ('tis the counsel even of a Heathen) but yet *ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ καὶ ἐν ἰσχύϊ*, inure him by degrees. As the Precepts and Axioms by which a wise man should guide his life according to the royal Moralist should be [*βραχέα καὶ συνοχρῆστα*] brief and compendious: So much more for youth. Long Orations burthen their small memories too much, and (through such imprudence) may occasion the loathing of spiritual Manna, considering their being yet in the state of nature. As Physicians in their Diætical precepts prescribe to children, little and often: so must we deal with beginners in the things of God. A young plant may quickly be over-glutted with manure, and rotted with too much watering.

Y 2

Weak

*Plut. de
laud.
Ed. H. Steph.
p. 2.*

*Ælian. de ani-
mal. l. c. 11.*

Deut. 32. 2.

1 Tim. 2. 11.

Arist. Pol. l. 1.

c. 8. p. 86.

1 Cor. 14. 35.

1 Pet. 3. 7.

Isa. 38. 19.

Deut. 6. 7. &

11, 18.

Arist. Pol. l. 7.

c. 17.

Antonin. de

seipso. l. 4 p. 69

Ed. Lon. 1643.

Weak Eyes newly opened from sleep, cannot bear the glaring Windows, scarce a candle at the first. *Line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little.* You must drive the little ones, as Jacob did, very gently towards *Canaan*.

Entertain their tender attentions with discourses of Gods infinite greatness, and amiable goodness, of the glories of heaven, of the torments of hell. Things that affect the senses must be spiritualized to them, catch their affections by a holy craft. Deal as much in similitudes as thou canst. If you be together in a garden, draw some sweet and heavenly discourse out of the beautiful flowers: If by a river-side, treat of the water of Life, and the rivers of pleasure that are at Gods right hand: If in a field of corn, speak of the nourishing quality of the bread of Life: If you see birds flying in the air, or hear them singing in the woods, teach them the All-wise providence of God, that gives them their meat in due season: If thou lookest up to the Sun, Moon, and Stars, tell them, they are but the shining spangles of the out-houses of heaven: oh then what glory is there within! If thou seest a Rain-bow to diaper some waterish cloud, talk of the Covenant of God. These and many more may be like so many golden links, drawing Divine things into their memories. *I have used similitudes* by my servants the Prophets, saith God. Moreover, let young ones read and learn by heart some portions of the Historical books of holy Scripture. But above all, the best way of institution, especially as to the younger sort, may be performed by Catechisms, Plat-forms of sound words, by Question and Answer in a short compendious method; whose terms being clear and distinct, might be phrased out of holy Scripture, and fitted to their capacities by a plain, though solid stile, and to their memories by brief expressions.

Obj. *But some may object, That Children, not well understanding what they repeat, do but prophane the Name of God.*

Ans. To this I answer; That our reasonings ought not to countermand, or contradict Divine injunctions. We are commanded by God in the Book of Deuteronomy, to whet the Law upon our Children. *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* By the bending of young trees, and putting young fruit into glasses, you may form them into what shape you please. The Apostle commends the president of *Timothy* to the whole Christian world, that [*and speaks*] from a little sucking child; as the word imports, he had known the holy Scriptures. Some children have been sanctified from the birth, as is evident in *Jeremy*, and *John Baptist*.

Now.

Now we being ignorant, who are under the election of God, must use the means to all, especially such as are under the federal stipulation between God and us; such as are the children of believing Parents. They are commanded to remember their Creator in the days of their youth: And who should make such impressions of God upon their hearts, but those that are over them by Divine appointment, who ought to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. As seals are to be imprinted upon the wax, while it is tender: [*ἵνα αἱ μαθή- αὐτῶν ταῖς ταῖς ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ ἐν ὑποταγῇ τοῦ κυρίου*] so, teaching and instruction will best fix upon their minds while yet they are children. So soon as ever reason begins to sprout forth, yea as soon as they are drawn from the breasts, begin to season younglings with the sense of Gods majesty and mercy. Gardiners begin to graft, so soon as ever the sap begins to arise in the spring, and the bud of the stock to swell and enlarge. Colts must be backt before their mettle grows too high; and Heifers must be used to the yoke before they attain to their full strength, or else they will prove unserviceable. God commanded in the old Law, more Lambs, Kids, and Bullocks, young Turtles, and Pidgeons, to be offered upon his Altar, than those of elder growth: First-fruits and green-corn must be presented to the Lord. To intimate the dedication of our children (those reasonable Sacrifices) unto the Temple and service of God, while they are young and tender. The sooner you sow, the sooner you may reap. Sow thy seed in the morning, sayes Solomon. The benefit of timely instruction is scarce imaginable. But I come to the third.

Eccles. 12. 1.

Ephes. 6. 4.

Plutarch. de
laud. p. 5.

Mat. 28. 9.

Levit. 2. 14.

Rom. 12. 1.

Eccles. 11. 9.

3. Add to thine instructions preceptive injunctions, lay it as a charge upon their souls in the name of God, that they hearken to, and obey thine Institutions. Every house is under a kinde of kingly Government [*πᾶσα οἰκία βασιλεύει*, &c. *Quisquis domus regnat* Arist. Pol. l. 1. c. 1. *ἀρχόν*] and a Ruler gives laws to Wife and Children. An instance we have in the case of Solomon, who acquaints us that he was his Fathers Son, tender and onely beloved in the sight of his Mother. He taught me also, and said unto me; Let thine heart retain my words, keep my Commandments and live. When David was ready to dye, Solomon, the Text sayes, was [*yet young and tender*] and notwithstanding that, his Father instructs him in many grave and excellent lessons; and in the Book of Kings 'tis remarkable, that when Davids decease drew nigh, he charged Salomon his son, saying, &c. Now when Solomon came to the Crown, he was but eighteen years old; or nineteen at the most, as the learned seem to evince from several passages of David.

Prov. 4. 33.

1 Chro. 22. 3.

& 29. 1.

1 Chro. 28. 9.

&c.

1 King. 2. 1.

1 Usser. annal.

De ps. 1. p. 56.

vid.

R. A. Leigh. hist.

Ps. l. 2. c. 18.

J. 4.

Senec. Epist.

38.

Prov. 1. 8. & 6

10. & 31. 1.

Pr. 3. 1. 5. 16.

Titus 2. 3. 4.

Gen. 18. 19.

Mr. Bolton's

Life, p. 33.

Printed with

his Works.

Ato. Anno

1639.

Psal. 101. 8.

Cant. 2. 15.

How young then was he when his Father David, and his Mother Bathsheba began to instruct him; and lay their preceptive charge upon him. This charging of obedience upon young ones, is like the tying and claying on of the graft upon the stock. [*Non multis opus est, sed efficacibus*] Efficacious words rather than many are to be sought, studied, and used.

Nay, women have both precept and precept also for this work, as who do more frequently converse with their children in their tender Age? We have an excellent example in Bathsheba teaching her Son, and pressing Divine precepts upon his heart, she gave also a portion of instruction, as well as of food to her servants and maidens. Antient Matrons are commanded also by the Apostle to teach younger women the works of sobriety and obedience. For this matter Abraham was commended by God himself, as a pattern to all posterity. *I know him* (says God) *that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment, &c.* And therefore God was pleased to reveal secrets to him. To conclude, It is good to edge your precepts and instructions with some notable remembrances of the great day, as that holy and learned Mr. Bolton did to his children upon his Death-bed; for speaking of the instructions that he had given them in the time of his sickness, and before, he hoped they would remember it, and verily believed *that none of them durst think to meet him at that great Tribunal in an unregenerate state.*

4. Set a narrow guard upon the first sproutings of Sin in their conversations. Crush Vipers in the Egge. Exercise your hazle-rods upon the Serpents heads, when they first creep out of their holes, being chill and feeble in the beginning of the spring. *I will early destroy all the wicked of the Land,* says David. You must set about this work betimes, check every evil and unfavoury word at the first hearing; watch the beginnings, the first bubblings of corruption in them. A man may pull off a tender bud with ease, but if he let it grow to a branch, it will cost him some pains. It is observed by experienced Naturalists, that a Common bringing forth nothing but Fern, may be made very good ground: if when the weed comes up tender and green, it be often cut down, you will (in three or four times) discourage the root, and make it dye away. It may prove so through Divine blessing, as to the shootings up of original corruption, if thou be diligent and constant at first. Take us the Foxes, say the *little Foxes*, that spoil the Vines; this is the way to destroy their race, as well as to preserv

preserve your tender Grapes, David smote Goliath in the fore-head; he smites the Devil and Sin in the fore-head [*qui in initio temptationis vincit*] that falls upon, and overcomes temptation at first. It is a saying of *Salvian* [*Cum primum homo peccare incipit, Aeternum sibi accendit ignem*] When one first begins to sin; then he kindles the Eternal fire. Oh that you would then begin to cast water upon the first kindlings of sin in your little ones! Cut off the occasions of sin by prudent interposition. It is strange to see, what excuses and palliations for sin; what collusions in speech little Children will use? Before thou canst teach them to speak plain English, the Devil, and a corrupt heart, will teach them to speak plain lies. While their tongues do yet falter much in pronunciation; they'll falter more in double speaking. What great need is there then to put a curb and bridle upon thy child's tongue as *Psal. 39. 11.* well as thine own. Undermine their fallacies by discreet examinations, and sagacious questions. If this work be not set to betimes, possibly in process of years they may prove too cunning to be caught, unless thou season them quickly with the awe of Gods judgments, and the danger of sin: Teach their conscience to blush, as well as their cheeks, that they may from an in-wrought principle eschew the evil, and do the good. Else they may too soon prove like the Hares in *Ælian de ani-* *mal. l. 6. c. 47.* *lian*, that by leaping this way and that way, when they come nigh their muse, do [*taetæu ræ igræ*] confound their footsteps to prevent discovery. If thou suffer a child, or a young servant, to go on in sin unregarded, untaught, unchid, and think 'tis too little to mind at first; that sinful folly will be thy scourge in the end. God many times whips an aged Parent by that child, which was unwhipt at first. *Adonijah* had well nigh broken the design of *David* about *Solomons* being set in the Throne; whom his Father had never displeased by saying, why hast thou done so? that is, never checked him for his faults. The means to take away the root, and foundation of evil customs and habits, is to fall a weeding in the spring of thy child's life [*Ægre reprehendus quod finis consecrare.*] Reproofs will go down untowardly, when children come once to their teens, when their years come up to double numbers.

5. Preserve them from evil society. *David* not onely hated sin in general, but especially he detested to have it become an inmate in *Psal. 101. 7. 8.* his house. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. That so the evil example, and pitch-like society of wicked persons might not cleave to, and corrupt his near Relations. Children are like the *Polypus* in *Ælian*, that turns into

into colour, of that rock or weed in the Sea that lies nearest. Imitation is natural to Children: Associates and companions are the patterns of their imitation. Wherefore *Plutarch* in his Tract about the education of children, advising some *Grecian* boys to be brought up with them, gives this precept, that these *αἰρεσέων καὶ καλῶν* should be *συνδιὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν*, of virtuous manners and behaviours, lest children should contract some vice from ill society. For, according to the Proverb, He that lives with a lame man, will learn to limp. Nay, one greater than

Prov. 22. 24, Plutarch tells us, That with a furious man we should not go, lest we learn his ways. Children especially, may be dangerously infected by lewd and corrupt company. Many children of godly parents have had their manners souled and vitiated extremely by frequent and familiar converse with the naughty children of wicked neighbours.

6. In the next place, Let seasonable and prudent rebukes be administered, according to the nature and quality of their offences. Begin gently, use all perswasive motives to draw and allure them, if possible, to the ways of God; tell them of the rewards of glory, of the sweet society in Heaven: Endeavour to satisfy their hearts, that God is able to fill their souls with such joys, as are not to be found in the creatures. *Of some having compassion making a difference.* But if this will not do, then begin to mix some more severe expressions of thy holy anger against sin. As there is a concatenation in virtues, so in passions. Love and anger are not altogether [*ἀσύνετα*] incompatible affections. Nay love may be the principle and foundation of that anger, which shoots its rebuking Arrows against the But of sin. It is well observed by the Philosopher [*Πρὸς τὰ ἐκκαθάματα ὁ αἰ μὴ φέρεται ἐν τῷ κατὰ τὸ χηρὸν φιλίᾳ*]. There may be accusations and reprehensions connext with that love, which designs the profit and benefit of the persons beloved, and that (*ἐνδύως*, as he says) according to the Rule even of right reason. Thou mayest tell thy child, and that with some grains of vehemency, that if he continue in sinful courses, that God will be angry, and thou wilt be angry, and then let him know what a fearful thing it is, to fall into the hands of the living God. This is the way to be angry, and not to sin, as the Apostle commands. Let not your passions, like unruly torrents, overflow the banks that are limited by Scripture and reason. There is a grave and sober anger, that will procure Reverence, and advance Reformation. That which is mixt with horrid noise and clamours, floweth from the breasts of fools. In vain shalt thou attempt to reclaim others, who art so exorbitant thy self. He that lets loose the reins upon the necks of the unruly horses of his

Jude 22.

*Arist. Ethic.
2. 10. c. 13.*

*Heb. 10. 31.
Ephes. 4. 16.*

his passions, will endanger the tumbling his reason out of the Chariot. How shall that person in his rebukes speak reason to another, that hath lost his own? He that is a slave to his irascible appetite, can never manage ingenuous reproofs. A childe can never perswade himself that such anger proceedeth from love, when he is made the sink to receive the daily disgorgements of a Cholerick stomach; when the unhappy necessity of his relation ties him to be alwayes in the way, where an angry disposition must vent and empty it self. If thou that rulest be thus unruly, how canst thou expect thy Inferiours to be regular, when thy uncomely demeanour does almost convince them, that love can hardly be the genuine root of thine anger, but that they are made the sad objects of thy native temper, or that thy reprehension is spiced with hatred? Observe therefore a prudent administration of thy Rebukes. Gild those bitter pills with the hopes of recovering thy favour upon amendment, mix these unpleasant potions [τοῖς γλυκύσι *Plus ibid p. 22* χυμοῖς] with some sweet emollient juyces, that such inter-woven lenity may procure access for your admonitions, and effect your desired issue. The quality of the offence, and the various aggravations of it, must state the quantity, measure, and duration of thine anger. Great faults, if repeated, deserve a greater ardency of spirit. Consider likewise the station and place of thy several relations. A Wife ought not to be rebuked before Children and Servants, least her subordinate authority be diminished. Contempt cast upon the Wife, will reflect upon the husband at last. Yea, for smaller offences in Children and Servants, if they be not committed openly, rebuke them apart, and in private. But above all, Take heed thou be not found more severe in reproving faults against thy self, than sins against the great God. *They that honour me (saith God to Eli, in the case of his sons) I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* It is a point of excellent wisdom to manage thy Family aright in these cases. A Pilot may shew as much skill and dexterity in steering of a little Catch or Pinnacle of pleasure, as of the vast Gallions of *Spain*. If thou hast cause to be angry, yet let not thy storms run all upon the Rocks, but endeavour [ταχέως ὑποταγμένας, μάλλον δεξιούμεν ἢ αἰεὶ τὸν πατέρα ἢ βασιλευμεν] *Plus ib. p. 23.* speedily to cool the Inflammation, to abate the Fever, and slake the fire of anger: It is better for a Father to be often and nimble, than to be heavy and durable in his wrath. Wink at infirmities; if not such as are immediately sinful, chide them with frowns, and not with bitter assaults; reserve thy publick and sharp reprehensions for open and scandalous offences, for reiterated and repeated transgressions

gressions which bear a shew of great neglect, if not of some contempt and disdain.

7. Keep up a constant and vigorous practice of holy Duties in thy family. As for me, says *Joshuah*, *I and my house will serve the Lord*. *Josh. 24. 15.* *Moses* commanded the *Israelites* to go over the Laws and Precepts which he had given them from God, in their own families in private among their Children. The Instructions and Exhortations of Gods Ministers in publick, should be repeated at home, and whetted to and
Deut. 6. 7. again, upon the little ones. *Samuel* had a Feast upon the Sacrifice in
1 Sam. 9. 12. his own house. *Job* and others had Sacrifices in their own Families.
Exod. 12. 3, 4 The Passover-Lamb was to be eaten in every particular house. God says, he will pour out his fury upon the families that call not upon his
Zech. 12. 12. Name. There are times that every family must be apart, as well as every wife and person apart. All the Males of *Abrahams* Family were
 13. appointed to pass under the ordinance of Circumcision. The keeping up of Family-duties makes every little house become a Sanctuary, a Bethel, a house of God. And here I would advise that Christians be not over-tedious in their Duties of private Worship. I have heard from a near relation of that holy man Mr. *Dod*, that he gave this counsel, that the constant Family-prayers should not ordinarily exceed above a quarter of an hour, if so much. The morning and evening Sacrifices at the Temple, and the Passover-offerings (which were for every family) consisted but of one Lamb. Take heed of making the wayes of God irksome, and unpleasant. If God draw forth thy heart sometimes, do not reject and repress Divine breathings; but usually labour for succinctness and brevity, such as may stand with holy reverence to God, so as not to huddle over excellent and weighty duties, and yet such as may render religious worship, desirable in the Eyes of those whom thou wouldest have to look towards *Canaan*. The Spirit is willing many a times when the Flesh is weak, and a person may better for a little time keep his thoughts from wandering and discomposure, when as the large expence of Expressions gives occasion for too much
Eccles. 5. 2. diversion. *God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy words be few.* When our Lord gave his Disciples a form of Prayer, which was for quotidian and daily use, as appears by that petition, Give us *this day* our daily bread: you know how short and compendious it is. The Spirits are like strings of Harps and Bows, which if never remitted and slackened; will crack, and make those Instruments unserviceable. It is of good use likewise to vary the duties of Religion; sometimes sing, and sometimes read, sometimes repeat, some-
 times

Plur. &c.
read.

times catechize, sometimes exhort. [*Orationi lectio, lectioni succedat oratio, breve videbitur tempus, quod tantis operum varietatibus occupatur.*] It was Hieron. Tom. 4. the direction of that holy Hermit of Bethlehem, Let reading succeed p. 57. prayer, and prayer reading: That time will seem short which is exercised with such variety of works. Aristotle observes out of a Poet, [*μεταβολὴ πάντων γλυκύτερον, διαπορεύεται*] That, Change is a most sweet thing, by reason of our pravity. Indeed, sayes the Philosopher, unto simple natures, the same action is most pleasant, and therefore God delights in one and the same simple pleasure. However let us use the best art we can to draw on our own hearts, as well as of inferi-
 ors, to delight more constantly in holy duties. But in two things be principally frequent; the offering up the sacrifice of prayers, and the keeping of children to read daily some portion of holy Scriptures, as Jerom counsell'd *Leta* [*Reddat tibi pensum quotidie de Scripturarum floribus carptum*] Let thy childe give thee a daily account of some choice flowers crompt out of the Bible.

Arist. Ethic.
1.7. c. 14.

Hieron. p. 57.

8. Endeavour by all good means to draw them to publick ordinances: for there God is in a more especial manner present. *There he bath commanded a blessing and life for evermore: There he walketh among his Golden Candlesticks, when the King sitteth at his Table, the Spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.* He makes the place of his feet to be glorious. Though it were Gods appointment that the males onely should at the solemn feasts repair to *Shiloh*; yet *Elkanah* carries up all his house to the yearly Sacrifice. He would have his Wife, and Children, and Servants, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his Temple, and you know what a great blessing succeeded upon *Hannah*. *Cornelius* also when *Peter* came to preach at *Cæsarea* upon Gods immediate command, he calls together all his kindred and acquaintants to hear the Sermon. *Jesse* and his Sons came together to the Sacrifice, which *Samuel* offered to the Lord at *Bethlehem*. It is an ungodly wicked custome to leave many Children and Servants at home needlessly upon the Lords Day. Indeed in great and numerous Families, where there are many small Children, that might disturb the Congregation, and where much provision is necessary for such as attend upon God in the duties of Worship, there the case is somewhat altered; for such works of mercy are dispensed with by God himself: But labour to contract the number of absents to the smallest quantity possible, and let Servants take their turns, that none may be away at home; leave none behinde thee without necessary and urgent cause. As for such as can be present at Ordinances, remember to examine

Psal. 133. 3.
Rev. 2. 1.
Cant. 1. 12.

1 Sam. 1. 21.

Acts 10. 24.

1 Sam. 16. 5.

Mat. 13. 51.

Mar. 4. 34. 5.

them of what they heard; as our blessed Lord the grand pattern of our Imitation dealt by his beloved Disciples, when he had preached that famous Sermon by the Sea-side, Jesus asks them, *Have ye understood all those things?* and when they were alone, and apart from the multitude, then he expounded and explained all things that he taught, more fully to them.

9. In the next place, if all these things fore-mentioned will not prevail, but inferiours will still run on in a course of sin, then oughtest thou to repair to paternal correction. Now chastisements must be suited to their Age, the temperament of their natures, and several dispositions, the various qualities and kinds of their offences. Indulge a pardon sooner to lesser faults upon repentance and sorrow. You must consider, whether their faults proceed from imprudence and weakness, upon what ground and occasion, upon what provocation or seduction. Call to mind their former lives, whether they have fallen seldom and rarely, or often and frequently into the same sin. Observe whether they appear to be deeply sorrowful, and truly humbled, and readily beg forgiveness of God and you [*cum animo non revertendi*] with a promise of a new life. In these and the like cases, you must adhibit great diligence and prudence. Due punishment is a part of economical justice, and there must be care had, least by frequent impunity they and their fellows be hardened in the ways of Sin, and grow contumacious against the Commandments of God. *He that spareth his Rod, hateth his Son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes. Thou shalt beat him with the Rod, and deliver his soul from Hell.* This is an Ordinance and Appointment of God. *Our Fathers corrected us, and we gave them reverence.* But let Superiours remember, that they must not do this without good, and without great cause, and when all other means will not prevail. If it be possible to rule without the rod, 'tis best. Happy are those Parents to whom God hath given such towardsly Children, that a nod, that a frown, that a wink, will reform them. Certainly the wisdom of Parents might do much this way at first. If their Children be of any tollerable frames, that the holding up of a finger may excuse the holding up the rod. It preserves, and increases the affections of Children exceedingly. That of the Tragedian is a good Maxime in æconomicks; *Qui vult regnare diu, languidè regnet manu.* Durable power is fixed upon gentle management. Take heed of exasperating, and provoking your children to wrath, by rigid and severe courses, where less may effect your purpose, and that more kindly. There be some cruel Parents and Masters, that carry themselves.

Prov. 13. 24.
& 23. 14.

Heb. 12. 9.

Ephes. 6. 4.

selves more like raging Brutes, than Men, that take pleasure in tyrannical Corrections. They can let their children swear, and lye, and filch, and commit any other sin, and yet correct them not; but if they do not what they would have them, then they fall upon them, and beat them like wild Beasts: Know, that God will require such vile acts at your hands in the great day. O rather let them see that thou art angry for Gods sake, and not for thine own. There must be a great deal of gracious pity to their souls, and holy love mixt with thine anger against sin. O how few be there that beg in secret, that God would soften the hearts of their relations by their due and moderate castigations! Oh pray, that God would lay his holy hand upon their hearts, when thou layest thy Rod upon their backs. After they have paid their debt to Justice, look more serene upon them, and thereby encourage them to amendment. Morosity and acerbity (*στυγερότης*) if continuing still, will check their hopes of ever returning to thy grace and favour. Let ancient Rulers have a care of too much sourness of carriage; for many times through the common incidencies of age, the Philosopher hath observed that they are too proclive to jealousies, suspicions [*ἐν τῷ χυμῷ ἀπολαμβάνουσιν ὅλα*] to interpret all things in the worst sense, and so possibly to be too quick and ready upon easie suggestions, to think of, and deal hardly with their Inferiours: Be careful to use both your ears, and hearken to both parties in matters of complaint. But if upon deliberate and mature conviction, nothing less will prevail: Follow Gods command herein, and thy Son shall give rest unto thy soul. In all these cases there lies a great point of prudence, to let them know, that thou hast yet greater corrections for them, if they mend not. That the fear and terror of what thou hast yet reserved, may work them to a compliance. They that shew the utmost of their rigor and power in such acts at once, despoil themselves of that authority and awe which otherwise they might ingenerate in their hearts: but take heed of all violent and passionate corrections. A Heathen could say to his servant [*Cederem te nisi irascerer*] I would beat thee, were I not angry. He that smites when his passion boils, is too too subject to transcend the limits of moderation; vehement anger makes the hands to tremble, that such are not able to strike aright. Take heed lest thou make thy child or thy servant to become vile in thine own eyes, by too many stripes. Such persons plant quick-sets in the hearts of their children, that may grow up too fast to prick their own hands, yea their hearts another day.

10. If the fore-mentioned means through Divine blessing prove effectual,

*Arist. Ethic.
l. 8. c. 6.*

*Id. in Rhett.
l. 2, c. 12.*

Prov. 29. 17.

*Senten de irā.
l. 1. c. 15.*

Deut. 25. 34.

effectual, then praise and encourage them, when they come on though yet but a little. Ingenuous, yea rugged tempers are sometimes wrought upon by moderate and prudent *Euge's*. It's spoken of God himself, that *he will not always chide, nor keep his anger for ever.* As Magistrates, so Parents must be sometimes praisers of them that do well: Our Lord comes in sometimes with, *Well done good and faithful servant*: So must you, when they are towardsly and dutiful [*καταλαλῶν τοῖς ἰουδαίοις*] call up their spirits by commendation, [*Laudibus excitandum est ingenium.*] There is a notable virtue in praise, especially as to generous spirits, to excite and prick them forward to duty, and that principally when divers together, according as defects vary, are unequally praised, it stirs up a virtuous emulation. Only take heed of exceeding too much, for little vessels can bear no great sails; pride and arrogancy are many times nursed up by too exuberant and lavish expressions, and sometimes an unmannerly familiarity appears.

Psal. 103. 9.
Rom. 13. 3
Mat. 25. 21.

Hier. ad Lat.
p. 55.

Heb. 11. 6.
Hieron. Tom.
p. 100.

1 Sam. 2. 10.

11. Do they flourish and thrive in duty and obedience, and begin to take in precepts freely and kindly, then win them on further by rewards, according to their several capacities, and the quality of thine own estate. God is pleased most graciously to draw and allure us on in the ways of holiness, by the proposal of reward: *He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* I remember that *Jerom*, as to the green years of *Pacatula*, wishes her father to use these means, [*proponantur ei crustula, mulsæ præmia, &c. quicquid gustu suave est, quod vernat in floribus, quod rutilat in gemmis, quod blanditur in puppis, accipitura festinet, &c. Psalmos mercede decantet*] give her sweet-meats, flowers, jewels, babies, to entice her to learn the Psalms. As to years of further growth, such rewards as become them may be more proper. In some cases these have proved great spurs and incitations, at least to the outward work of Religion in younger ones. *Hannah* that good Woman brought up a little Coat every year to her Son *Samuel*, when he was in the service of the Lord at the Tabernacle in *Shiloh* under *Eli*. And you know the Father of the Prodigal in the Parable, when his Son returned home to lead a new life, he killed a fatted Calf for him, put the best robe upon his back, a ring upon his hand, and shoes upon his feet.

12. In the last place, be exceeding conscientious and cautelous in disposing them abroad, when either their education or profession requires it. As to the schools, when young and tender, chuse out such Guides and Masters as may edify them, and imprint something more of

Luke 15. 22.

of God upon their hearts. It is a great fault in many that take up any neighbour-school where there are prophane and wicked children, such as have learnt of their parents to swear, and take Gods Name in vain: Many times little youths gather a great deal of filth, and soil, and pollution in such places, that sticks by them many years after. It is a good work [*ἀπαλυσθῆναι τῶν ἀκαθάρτων ἢ τῶν δευμάτων ἀλλυθῆναι* *Arist. Pol. l. 7. 2.*] to prohibit and keep them off from all illiberal and fordid speeches and spectacles. There was it seems a great crew of naughty children at Bethel, in the days of *Elijah*, that mockt the Prophet; *2 King. 2. 23.* a place that was a Seminary and Nurlery for young ones in knowledge, *2 King. 2. 3.* Oh how sad is it for children that have been diligently taught at home in the fear of God, to unlearn all in wicked schools! Have a great Eye to this, and especially if they be such as are designed for Academical learning, that they be placed under godly Tutors at the University; or if for Trades, or other mechanical mysteries, that you chuse out the blessed shadow of a godly Master and Mistress, that may rivet and clench the nail that thou hast knockt in. Great will be thy comfort in this, if thou soughtest more a pious family, than a great and rich Trade. A family wherein ships go to Heaven, and a Trade is driven to *Canaan*. But especially in the grand concernment of Marriage, that they match into a godly family, in whose veins the blood of the Covenant doth run. An Heiress of the Divine Promises is a greater match than Empress of the whole world. He that hath but one foot of Land in Mount *Zion*, is richer than he that holds a Scepter over the round Globe.

I come now to the second branch of this Question, and that is,

Quest. 2. *By what means we may attain our desires in reference to a good work in the hearts of those that are our equals, whether of consanguinity, affinity, or neighbourhood?*

Ans. As to this, I shall only propose two particular Rules, which I cannot now handle largely.

1. Be diligent in private conference and admonition, as the providence of God shall administer seasonable occasions. Give attendance to *1 Tim. 4. 13.* exhortation. Exhorting one another; Lay before them the weighty and *Heb. 10. 25.* momentous matters of Eternity, and another world. Such things will make deep wounds to be cured in time by the hand of Heaven. Be short and nervous, and lead them off from Carnal discourse by some sweet and heavenly diversions.

2. Manage your Reproofs with great prudence and discretion: Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke *Rev. 19. 17.* thy

thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. I might here divert into a case almost co-incident, and that is,

Quest. When is it our duty to reprove such as we see and hear committing of sin as we pass by in the streets?

Ans. This being the business of another subject, I shall only say thus much, that if thou perceivest them by their haughty and scornful carriage to be such as will kick at rebuke, thou hast a rule from Solomon: *Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee.* When by the wisest conjecture that thou canst make, he is like to shew the properties of a brutish, swinish nature; *Cast not thy Pearls before Swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.* But if he be a person likely to receive impressions, and particularly if it be a trespass against thy self, go tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother. Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself, *Prov. 25. 9.* I have known admirable success in this case. But in all such cases observe these three Directions,

Prov. 25. 11.
Dialog. Laert.
in Aristotelo.

Castellan. de
vir. medic.
p. 117.

1. Time your Reproofs seasonably; Words spoken in season are like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver. [*αὐτὸ τὸ πάλαι φιλοσοφία ἰδὼν, πρὸ καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπιστάται*] This very point (says an ancient) is proper to a Philosopher to understand the season of all things. I may say, 'tis much more the excellency of a Christian to feel the pulse of the soul, and hit the disease in the very joyn; as 'tis reported of *Galen*, that when *Antoninus* laboured under a distemper, others not being able to declare where it lay, this Physician by his exactness in the evidence of Symptoms, pronounced that his stomach was vexed with crudities and indigestion: The Emperour cried out three times [*αὐτὸ ἔστι, αὐτὸ ἔστι, ὃ ἄνω, ἔστι*] That's it, that very thing is it, which thou hast spoken. As to our purpose, it is advisable, sometimes, not presently and immediately to tell bluntly upon the work, lest thou thy self shouldest be in a passion. Yet stay not too long, lest thy holy zeal be cooled, and both thou and he forget or dissemble the Circumstances, whereby reproof might be the better fixed. A seasonable time to intermeddle in these cases may be when a friend is under the holy hand of God in any affliction, particularly in a sickness. That time which is fit for bodily, may be much more fit for soul-physick. When thoughts of mortality, and the leaving of all outward enjoyments do prepare and meliorate the way for spiritual impressions.

2. Mix thy reproofs with meek and gentle Expressions. Every reproof should be like the *Syrupus Acetosus* of Physicians, the Syrup of Vinegar,

Vinegar, that carries with it a grateful sharpness. Take heed thou go not to this work vested in thine own anger; for though there may be in thee some holy zeal, yet take heed of mingling too much of kitchen-fire. Meek reproofs are like Tents dipt in the Balm of Gilead, that both search and cure the wound together. *Let the Righteous smite me*, Psal. 141. 5. *(says David)* and *it shall be a kindness*; and *let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent Oyl*, which shall not break my Head. Such are the Disciples of the good Samaritan, who poured in wine as an absterfve, and oyl as a suppling incarnative into the wound. Such are the children of that prudent Matron, *who opened her mouth in wisdom, and in whose tongue was the Law of kindness*. And yet, friends, it we be over-gentle, the core of the wound will remain. The Chirurgion, who hath taught his Fingers too much tenderness, and not willing to put his Patient to pain, may, through cruel kindness, occasion distorted limbs and lameness all a mans life. Corrosives are as necessary as glutinous plaisters, to eat down the proud Flesh of our sinful sores. Eli's sinful mildness procured the sharp sword of the Philistines to cut off his Sons, and occasioned such dismal events, that broke his own heart, and his neck too. In many Chymical operations, Salt is a most necessary ingredient, and causes things to ferment; without the salt of reproof in its due proportion, bare words of advice will seldom work. The temper of the person must be wisely considered. In some, too mild expressions lull them asleep in sin. No great matter (may they think) which extorts but such gentle reflections. In others, that are quick and apprehensive: *Soft words do pacifie wrath*. Such as are of cholerick tempers, whose gall doth much overflow their intestines, Physicians are more careful (of their Cholagoga) of such ingredients in their Purges that may exonerate, and not augment their choler. In all thy spiritual Physick, labour to clear it up, that thou givest no potion but what may tend to the health of his soul.

3. Be sure thou be unblameable as to that which thou reprovest in another. If thou doest the same things, for which thou rebukest thy Brother, thou art inexcusable, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self. He may well retort the Proverb upon thee, Physician heal thy self. *Cast out first the beam in thine own Eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy Brothers Eye*. This is the first and principal work [*αὐτὸν κρίνει ὃ ἐπὶ τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ, ὅτι καὶ οὕτως ἐπιβλέπει τοὺς ἄλλους*] to perswade thy self. Doest thou attempt to perswade others to that, whereunto thou art not arrived thy self? O vain man! who will believe that thou art in good earnest, that thou

A 2

doest

Psal. 141. 5.

Luk. 10. 34.

Prov. 31. 23.

Prov. 15. 1.

Rom. 2. 1.

Luke 6. 42.

Arrian. in E.
pict. l. 4. c. 6.

Rom. 2.

doest indeed abhor Idols, *spemus thou committest Sacrilege.*Obj. But some may object, *Shall we never reprove others in any case, till we are clear our selves; then who can perform this duty?*

James 1. 27.

Ans^r. I answer: As to scandalous, and such as grossly foul the conversation; a man through Grace may keep himself unspotted from the world. But in matters of infirmity, who can say that his heart or his life is free and clean. In the former, when thou hast washed thy hands in innocency, then mayest thou deal with thy Brother. In the latter, since in many things we offend all, involve thy self in the same reproof, and it may be digested the more kindly.

James 3. 2.

I come now to the third and last branch of the Question, and that is,

Quest. 3. *How shall we deal with Superiours, in case such are in the state of Nature? By what means may we most effectually promote their conversion?*

1. Here I might enlarge by way of Preface, to shew that it is lawful in some cases for Inferiours to deal with Superiours, though it be the most difficult task.

2. That it is not onely lawful, but sometimes necessary. For it may so fall out, that in a whole family there may be but one child, or one servant that truly fears God, as it was with Joseph in the house of Potiphar. What shall he do, that would fain win a Father, a Master, or any other Superiour unto God? As to this, I shall give in but two directions at present.

Diog. Laert. in
Zeno p 445.
Edit. Genev.
1615.

A. 1. Exhibit thy counsel, advice, or reproof, under the vails of similitudes, examples, or histories. Diogenes Laert. in the life of Zeno acquaints us [*τις τῶν ἐπισημοῦν, περὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὡς ἐστὶν, ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων*] that if he did reprehend any, he did it succinctly, not profusely, but *at some distance*. It is a good Rule as to Superiours. It is an elegant and a profitable way for managing this necessary duty, though usually ineffectual and successless, for want of vigilant circumspection and prudence. If thy Father be ungodly and unholy, recite some history out of the Bible, or out of Church-writers, that may have a sweet reflexion upon thy Fathers way. Sometimes Parables and Proverbial speeches that are modest and sober, may hit the joint. He may vouchsafe to behold his face in the glass, who would storm at direct reproof. Parents many times when they are hit thus meekly and modestly, if they be wise, will seem to take no notice, but may ponder upon it a great while after. As our Lord when he told his Parents that he was about his Fathers business, the Text says, that *Mary kept all those sayings*.

Luke 2. 51.

sayings in her heart. This is drawing the Bow, as it may seem to the superiour, many times at an adventure; yet may thine Arrow hap to pierce even within the joynts of the harness. Parables are feigned examples, and are [*ἡμῶν ἰσχυρῶς*] near a kin to Inductions. Such was the great wisdom of *Aesop* and *Stesichorus* in their dayes, as the Philosophers notes. Such was the Parable of *Jotham* to the men of *Shechem*. Thus *Nathan* dealt with *David*, and our blessed Lord himself after this manner many times handled the High-Priests and Rulers of the people; he reproveth them sometimes in dark sentences, and chosen Parables. But if Superiours be over-morose, and exceeding sagacious, and highly magisterial, then a disapproving silence, a dis-relishing look, as speedy a departure out of their presence as may stand with the necessary detentions of thy duty [*ἀποστρέφειν καὶ ἰπὸν θέλει σκεῖν καὶ σκεδανύσθαι δὲ οὐ γὰρ δεξιότατον τῷ λόγῳ.*] a holy blush for them that are shameless in sin, may do greater things than thou art aware of.

Arist. Rhet. 1.2

c. 20.

Judg. 9.7, &c.

2 Sam. 12.1, &c.

2 Thes. 3. 14.

Epist. c. 55.

Diog. Laert. in

Platon. p. 245.

Act. 26. 25.

1 Tim. 4. 1.

2 King. 5. 13.

Gen. 21. 12.

1 Pet. 3. 6.

Gen. 11. 31. &

12. 1.

Josh. 24. 2.

Dan. 4. 27.

2. Manage all your discourses with reverent expressions and compellations. If it be a great part of common humanity [*προσηγορεύειν καὶ χαεαρρίζειν*] to salute courteously those that we meet: what dexterior affability, and most sweet lowly demeanour should we exert and put forth to those above us? *Paul* in his conference with *Porcius Festus* salutes him with great respect. Most Noble *Festus*; I speak the words of truth and soberness. Grace expells nor the due distance of Nature. *Rebuke* not an Elder, sayes the Apostle, but intreat him as a Father, that he may see thou desirest and longest, that he may be begotten to God. Mark how *Naamans* servants treated their Master, with what submissive reverence did they bespeak him in that matter of his washing in *Jordan*. My Father, If the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it, &c? *Abraham* hearkened you know to the voice of his Wife, at the command of God, in the case of *Hagar*; and the spirit of God takes notice of the temper of *Sarah*, and commends her for it, that she called her husband Lord. And that I may give an instance in all three relations, if we consult the circumstances of the Text, we shall finde it probable, that *Terah* the Father, hearkened to *Abraham* his Son, as to his departure out of an Idolatrous Country. For the voice of God came to *Abraham* alone, bidding him to go out of *Ur* of the Chaldees, to a land that he would shew him. *Nebuchadnezzar*, that great and mighty Monarch, did not reject that pious and savoury counsel which was given him by *Daniel* his captive-servant within his Palace. *Job* likewise a man of great possessions

Job 31. 13. possessions in the East, did not despise the cause of his Man-servant or his Maid servant, when they contended with him. Humble, modest, and reverent behaviour may have notable influence into Superiours. It is controverted by Seneca, whether or no a childe may not heap greater benefits upon a Father, than he had received from him. It may be clearly stated in the Affirmative; if he should be a means of turning him unto God. The Father begets his Son to a miserable and mortal life: The Son begets his Father to that life which is Glorious and Eternal.

There remain yet four general Directions respecting all Relations.

I. Insinuate thy self into their affections. Let them know, that thou hast no design upon them, but to make them happy. Indevour to perswade them that thou hast no private end, onely their everlasting good. Winde into their hearts, screw thy self into their affections; and thou hast done half thy work. [*ἡ δὲ ἔργα ὑμῶν ἔσται πολλὰ καὶ ὡς ἀνὰ ψαλμὸν καὶ Νῦν*] Nothing so inimical to love as fear and necessity. When all jealousies of any sinister ends are blown away, then exhortations and counsels go down comfortably. When persons are convinced and satisfied that in all our Applications we study their benefit and profit, this opens an effectual door to all the means that we shall use. Thus the Apostle accosts the Romans, *I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some Spiritual gift.* Thus he facilitates his way to the Philippians. God is my record, *how greatly I long after you* all in the bowels of Jesus Christ, [*τὸς τὸ δὲ αὐτὸν συμπάσας προσεχόμενος ἑαυτὸν καὶ τὴν ἑσέβαν πρὸς καμὲν*] we do even naturally respect and reverence such as bring that which appears profitable to us; especially when Superiours carry themselves with courteousness and kindness. For most men delight to be honoured and esteemed by them that are above them [*διὰ τὴν ἐλπίδα*] for the hope that they conceive of some special profit to be received from them. The case varies not in spiritual matters. Labour then to gain their love, their good esteem, and the work will thrive beyond expectation.

2. Study to convince them by rational Arguments [*ἡ οὐδὲ οὐλοῦντα* *ἔργα καὶ λόγος*] Persuasion is the daughter of love and reason. Our affections indeed most times are first wrought upon, we are so sensual by nature. When thou art once gotten into their hearts, then press them with weighty Arguments drawn out of Scripture; argue with them about the folly of sin. See how Job handles the matter with his wife about murmuring and impatience against God, *What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?* Let them know that all the ways

Mar. Tyr. diff. fert. 10. Ed. Heinf. 1607.

Rom. 1. 11.

Phil. 1. 8. Simplificum in Epist. c. 38. p. 217. Edit. Salen.

Arist. Ethic. 1. 8 c. 8.

Man. Tyr. diff. 10.

Job 2. 10.

ways of God are pleasant ways, and all his paths are peace. That the Prov. 3. 17. path to heaven is a most sweet path to walk in. Shew them the beauty of Christ, the glory of Christ, draw aside the curtain, and unvail the mysteries of free-grace before their Eyes. Let them behold the image of that blessed Saviour pourtrayed in Scripture. As the spouse did to the Daughter of Jerusalem, run over all the excellencies of Christ, and then conclude, *He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O Daughters of Jerusalem.* Tell them what experience you had of the blindness, nakedness, miserableness of your own condition formerly, when you were as they are now; that you then thought of Religion, as they do; that it was but a peevish, foolish, unnecessary strictness. Tell them how the case is mended with you, how admirably through mercy 'tis altered.

3. Let your conversation be very exemplary; so that what you persuade, may be strongly confirmed by your own example. Both vice and virtue are learned by Presidents. *Alexander* in his manners and gate did imitate his Master *Leonides*, as long as he lived; [*Nil in te & in patre suo videat, quod si feceris peccet*] Let thy child behold nothing in thy walking, which, if followed, may prove sinful. Be an example to others of holiness, that they may not offend by the authority of thy Name. Though thy precepts be short and concise, let thine actions, exemplifying those precepts, be constant and perpetual. Deny your selves sometimes in the enjoyment of Lawful things, which may not be expedient before Carnal Relations, when you are upon this work. Let *wives*, says the Apostle *Peter*, win their Husbands by their holy conversation. Walk so meekly, so obediently, so winningly by an amiable deportment, that a wicked drunken husband may see the picture of grace in the life of a wife, and may be forced to confess, that grace of a truth dwelleth in her. Many times the unbelieving husband may be saved, even in this sense by the believing wife, & vice versa. *David* professeth that he would walk in his house with a perfect heart. As the water follows the finger in the clay: so may thy example lead them on to the things of God. There is a secret reverence and awe upon the hearts of others, when any in the family do walk worthy of the Gospel unto all well-pleasing.

Fourthly and lastly, After thou hast used all these fore-mentioned directions (which lye couched in the bowels of these words in the Text [*my hearts desire is, that Israel may be saved*]) For if he did heartily desire their good, as he professeth, then he would use all good means proper and proportionable to that end. But then he adds

his,

his prayer to God for the same purpose, and so must thou) follow the example of our holy Apostle; Alas, all thy instructions without prayer will do no good. Go to God to sanctifie all, and to perswade their souls that you have a most single and sincere aim at their everlasting salvation. Pray apart for them, and if the condition of thy Relations will admit, pray with them, and therein touch some sweet reflections upon their souls. *Elijah* when he was in prayer with company, cries out, *O Lord hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God.* Our blessed Lord also in that heavenly prayer to the Father, makes most sweet and ardent mention of his Disciples who were present with him. *Job*, he sacrificed for his children, he sent for them, and sanctified them, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all; To teach us to pray for children distinctly one by one. *Abraham* he begs of God, *Oh that I myself may live in thy sight,* and *Bathsheba* she calls *Salomon* the Son of her Vows. *Austin* was the child of *Monica's* prayers and tears. Ask counsel of God as *Manoah* did, that he would be pleased to teach you what you must do with your children. Beg of God wisdom and direction, that he would order providential seasons for their good; let that be your great request in secret; Oh that such a child, such a servant, might be pull'd as a firebrand out of the fire, and brought home to God. Should you have the wisdom of Angels, if God do not come in to your help, all your labour will be in vain. Cry out with the poor man in the Gospel, *Lord have mercy on my Son*, for he is fore vexed; for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water, sometimes into one sin, sometimes into another, whereby his soul incurs fearful and terrible dangers. Commend thy child to God, whom thou hast begotten to death and damnation, unless wonderful mercy interpose it self. Sprinkle him with the holy waters of melting tears, beg of God that he may be delivered from the wrath to come by his Almighty Arm. Petition earnestly for the pardon of those sins, for the rooting out that spiritual wickedness, which thou hast been the means to propagate. Pray it out, fast it out, weep it out before God. Such Devils go not out without fasting and prayer.

Now I shall make some brief Application of the whole, and so conclude.

Use 1. In the first place, hence we learn the diffusive nature of holiness; it is like the widows oyl, that filled all the vessels of her neighbours. He that is holy, is *found* as, like unto God himself for communicativeness, as well as for purity in his small degree and measure; The language

language of a Saint is, *Come, let us sing praise, let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, Come ye, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, &c.* Psal. 95. 1, 2. *Isa. 2. 3.*

Use. 2. To reprove such as do not perform their utmost, that do not improve their skill and endeavour to the height in this excellent work. Every child is born an heir of Hell, and wilt thou use no means to deliver his soul from death, and to pull him out of the jaws of the Devil? Oh thou ungodly Father, that like *Gallio*, takest no care in this matter, God will require the blood of thy child, and the blood of thy servant at thy hands one day. Dost thou love thy child? A Heathen will teach thee thy duty. To love, saith he, is [to desire good things for such, and according to the utmost ability to endeavour to accomplish them]. There is but one good thing that is absolutely necessary for thy child, and that is, a happy union to God. What hast thou yet done to the effecting of that? Many are eagerly bent upon those designs, how their children, like *Caligula* in the Historian, may tumble in a room full of gold, but take little pains for the gold of *Oppir*, and that wisdom which is far above *Rubies*. Know, that all the sins of relations under your charge that are not reprov'd and corrected for, will become yours. Every drunken fit of thy servant will be counted thine to answer for. Every turn of pleasure that thy children and servants take in the fields upon Gods holy day, with thy approving connivance, will turn to thy account at the great Tribunal. If thou wouldst find favour with God, labour to divert them from the ways that lead to the chambers of death. He that neglects his duty herein, does what in him lyes to damn his child and himself too. As if he were in league with death, in covenant with Satan, and with Hell were at an agreement; as if it were a nothing matter for himself, and all his Relations to fall into the bottomless pit of fire and brimstone. Oh how many families are the filthy cages of unclean birds, like so many hog-styes and sinks of all manner of abominations! We can scarce walk the streets, but we shall hear swearing and cursing, and polluting Gods holy Name, and many obscene and filthy speeches, and see great wickedness committed, even by young striplings; and this is because they are not instructed and taught the fear of the Lord at home by their Parents and Rulers. There be many ruffling Gallants in our times, that look upon holiness as a crime, and count it their bravery to go towards Hell with open mouth, with a full swinge, that swim down the Rivers of Riot and Luxury into the dead Sea. That are so far from

reproving,

- reproving others for sin, that they commend and encourage them rather, that have much ado to bear with servants that perform excellent service, if they will not drink healths, and be debauched as well as themselves, more like *Nero* than *Christians*. If their children serve Satan never so much, they matter it not; so they do not ruine their Patrimony. No wonder that their children be profligate and vile, that have such sad Examples. The Spirit of God takes notice, that *Abaziah* was
- 2 Chron. 22. a wicked man, and gives this for the reason; His Mother was his counsellor to do wickedly. Such as will be angry rather, if their Relations do not walk in the wayes of sin, like the Wasps, in the Naturalist, that dip their stings in the poyson of Vipers. Their angry tongues are inured in the venom of sin. Oh how much good might a *Theophilus* do! when greatness and holiness run in a blood, how would the Generations to come rise up and bless them? how much honour might they bring to God? how would Religion flourish? how would our fields bring forth peace, and our streets run down with rivers of righteousness?
3. Hence we learn the horrible sin of such that cause others to do wickedly, that egge on others to the commission of sin; that encourage children to prophane the Sabbath, to lye, and swear, and seem to approve of, delight and rejoyce in it. *Who knowing the judgment of God (that they which commit such things are worthy of death) not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*
4. Hence we may infer, what great wisdom is requisite in managing those means that are proper and useful in order to the salvation of our Relations; what integrity of heart, what sincerity; what holy contempt of the scorns of this wicked world. Dost thou take upon thee the study of wisdom, sayes the *Stoick*, prepare thy self speedily [*ὡς καταγλαυθός* *μυθός*, to be laugh^{ts} & scorn] and expect that many should mock at thee? how much greater is the depravation of mens hearts since the fall in opposition to true holiness. Many a bitter taunt and scoff must thou go under, but in wisdom pass it by, regard it not, you work for souls. One soul begotten to God is better than the gaining of whole Kingdomes and Empires.
5. To such as live under holy Rulers and Governours of Families, that you would highly esteem them for their labour of love; that you would count it a singular mercy that God hath given any of you a holy Father, or a holy Mother, such as have spent many an hour in secret for thy good, that have sought it earnestly at the Throne of Grace, that thy life might be hid with God in Christ. Look upon their instructions

Instructions as so many Pearls, their reproofs as so many Rubies to wear Prov. 1. 9.
about thy Neck. Not to be reprov'd in the way of sin is a great judgment. To have these thorns and briars cast in the way to our sinful Hof. 2. 6.
lovers, is a great mercy. Oh, how many blessings do children enjoy by means of praying parents? count it a great and an admirable favour from God.

6. To such as are employed and exercised in this excellent duty and study, to perform it conscientiously. Who seriously endeavour, that their yoke-fellows may be the Spouses of Christ, their posterity the children of our heavenly Father, their servants the freemen of Christ, their kindred of the Blood-royal of Heaven. Let me say as our blessed Lord to *Zachew*, *This day is salvation come to this house*. This day hast thou fellowship with the Father and with the Son. The God of Heaven goes along with thee. Though thou dost not see the desired fruit of thy labour at present, do not despond, the work is Gods. It is like to some of those seeds, which sown in the Earth will not come up, till the second spring. The Husband-man *waiteth for the precious* Jam. 5. 7. 1
fruit of the Earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. It is often seen that there is a mighty power of God going along with such constant endeavours; at length the diligent hand may make thee rich. The grace that dwelt in the Grand-mother *Lois*, in the Mother *Eunice*, dwelt afterward in their little 2 Tim. 1. 5.
Son *Timothy*. Though God is not tied by any bond of nature, yet fervent prayer is of a high esteem in the sight of God. The use of means directed by God, is a hopeful sign of mercy intended: Where God chuseth to the end, he ordains to the means. He hath chosen us to be holy, that we might be glorious. However God deal with you in that particular request, yet be sure your care and pains will not lose a signal reward; your prayers shall return into your own bosom, and I tell thee, God watcheth over such a Family in a way of mercy and peace. His Eye of Grace is toward thee; his holy hand will uphold thee; his heart will bless thee. Unto his good pleasure, commit thy self, and wait the success; go on and prosper thou blessed of the Lord.

Ephes. 14. 11.

What are the Characters of a Souls sincere love to Christ? And how may that love to him be kindled and inflamed?

Ephes. 6. 24.

Grace be with all them, that love our Lord Jesus Christ, in sincerity.

Rom. 16. 24.

1 Cor. 16. 23.

24. 2 Ep. 13.

14.

Gal. 6. 18.

THese words may well be treated on without much Preface, there being nothing in them, which speaks any dependence upon, or connexion with any thing that went before. Some form of *Benediction* we find used by this Great Apostle, at the conclusion of every Epistle; and accordingly having driven his excellent design in *this* to the Church of *Ephesus*, to a full period or issue; he first makes an affectionate address to God, and to the Mediator in their behalf. v. 23. *Grace be to the Brethren, and love with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*, and then leaves his Apostolical benediction upon them, v. 24. *Grace be with all them, that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity*: Or, The blessing of the Eternal God be upon all the sincere hearted Christians among you, for so I look upon the latter words of the verse, as a *Periphrasis* of all real Christians; *Love to Christ being as essential to the Christian, as the Rational soul is to the man*. The only difficulty in the words, that will require our stay, is to enquire, what is meant [*ἐν ἀληθείᾳ*] in *Sincerity*, some refer it to the [*χάρις*] *Grace*, mentioned at the beginning of the verse, as if it had been read [*ἐν ἀκαταρσίᾳ*] unto *Incorruption*, or to bring them to Eternal life, or until they come to a state of Immortality. So many of the Antients, and of the Modern interpreters, *Beza*, *Tremellius*, and others.

Others.

Others read it, in Conjunction with the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, making it a qualification, or a discriminating note of that love, which is *sound, real, and sincere*, from that which is but *pretended, counterfeit, and easie* to be corrupted by every difficulty and temptation; And accordingly they translate, some [*in incorruptione*] others [*absque*] a third sort [*amore non vitioso nec culpato*]. All to the same sense with our English Translation, *In Sincerity*.

There are others who consider this phrase apart by it self; some explaining it by *purity of heart and conversation*, others as denoting thereby the *duration of love* [*tam prosperis quam adversis*, or] both in good and bad times. *Piscator* makes it a distinct branch of the Apostles prayer, as if he had said, *Grace be with all them, &c. and life Eternal*; Taking no notice of the preposition that is added, and varies the Construction. 'Tis the conjecture of a *Learned Divine*, That the Apostle in adding this clause, hath some reflection on the *Gnosticks*, who had mingled themselves with the Christians at *Ephesus*, and were, whatever they pretended, neither pure in their love to Christ, having mixed his Doctrine with abominable corruptions, nor yet sincere and lasting therein, being ready upon every blast of persecution that did arise, to deny him, and Apostatize from him; I shall for the present with *Musculus*, leave the matter indifferent, not only which of the two first, but of all the other fore-mentioned Opinions is fixed upon, finding no cause so far as concerns my present purpose to be peremptory in either. The Apostle doubtless meaning none else by *lovers of Christ*, but such whose hearts were sincerely and intirely affected to him, whether he intended to characterize them any further by [*ἀπαρτίως*, or no]. which, I presume, might easily be manifested from other parallel places (where this grace is mentioned and understood properly, having no additional qualification made thereto); and from the design of the words themselves, for certainly he would not so solemnly have intitled the rotten hearted Hypocrites, that did only pretend love to Christ, unto the *Benediction* of the great and blessed God. And if that stand good, we have enough for our purpose, and more; need not be contended for.

1 Cor. 13. 22.
Joh. 14. 15, 13
& 21. 15, 17.
1 Pet. 1. 3.

Let this suffice then for their meaning. The subject matter of them, whether you look to the first clause, or the last, is very noble, and might well deserve a large consideration; but I am confined to this single use of them, which is, to make them the *Foundation* of these two cases of Conscience.

What are the genuine Characters of a Souls sincere love to Christ?

Bb 2

And

And how may that love to him be kindled and inflamed?

And there are but two or three things, that I desire to suggest, and then we shall immediately begin to treat upon them in their order.

1. Let it be considered, that there is a vast difference between these cases, and such others as do refer only to lower duties. When we inquire after the *sincerity of our love to Christ*. It's all one as if we were upon the search, whether we are *Christians*, yea or not; and whether consequently our portion doth lie in the Divine Promises or Threatnings; And what is our *immediate duty*, that all other set aside, we must attend unto? And again, when we seek for directions to help us unto the *love of Christ*, our inquiry is not, how we may order this or that inferior action, but how we may attain to *saving Religion*, and *Christianity*; how we may escape the great Damning sin of the world, and intitle our selves to the love of God and Christ, and to all the rare privileges, which belong to the Communion of Saints. In a word, to the *Grace of God here*, and to *Eternal life hereafter*. See 1 Cor. 2.9. Jam. 1. 12. and 2. 5. Job. 14, 21, 23.

2. Let it be considered, That is not the distinct resolution of these cases that will be of *final advantage* to any person, unless thereby added to the former an impartial soul-searching examination of themselves; and to the latter, (as the case shall require) a conscientious practice; The resolutions given to cases of conscience about the right performance of duties, being nothing else, but the bare providing the food or physick; And again, the discoveries of mens states, thereby, being but the presenting Looking-glasses to them; neither of which are effectual, or do any good, but to such as faithfully use them.

3. Let me humbly mind you, that the more *uncertainty* you are at, touching your estates, when you have examined them by the *Characters*, the more diligence you are concerned to use in the practice of the *Directions*. And let me add this, That where you cannot *undeniably*, and *demonstratively* conclude, the sincerity of your love, (which I think few in comparison, on this side of Heaven can) there you must *never* lay by the advice about the last case; no not although your probabilities should be great, it being at the worst but an *easy and sweet trouble* to be still doing this great work over again, whereas its *irrecoverably dangerous and desperate* upon presumption, that we have done it already, to leave it wholly neglected: And I beseech you, remember this *useful Rule*, That in all trials, which Christians make about Grace, *It is safer to want credulity, than to be over hasty therein*.

The cases are two, and very fit to follow each other in the order, that

that is given to them. I begin with the first.

What are the genuine Characters of a souls sincere love to Christ?

And in order to the Resolution thereof; I must premise these several Propositions.

1. Proposition.

That there is a great deal of difference between *Love* as it is seated in the *Will*, or *rational Appetite*, and the same Act or Principle of *Love*, as seated in the *sensitive*. In the former, it is a *settled, rational, uniform, and deliberate motion*; co-incident with the very natural act of the will it self; *To Love*, (as the great School-man notes) being nothing else but [*intensive velle*] *to will intensively* either person or thing. The motion of the Will towards the Object, as good and desirable, and the earnest imbracing thereof; this is *rational Love*. And according to the various Aspects which it hath thereto, either as present or absent, perfect or imperfect; it is called *love of desire*, or *fruition*, *dependance*, or *complacency*: And if the object be such, as can or doth reciprocate affection, then its friendship [*Amor Amicitie*.] But now take *Love*, as it is an *Affection* properly so called, and seated in the lower faculties of the soul, and so there is a great variety and inequality in its motions; much easier to be felt, than expressed; sometimes the soul is in a kind of *extasie*, wrapt above it self; and then by and by it's flat and dull again. I note this first, for this reason, that you may understand what kind of love it is; that our inquiry doth proceed upon, *viz.* *Rational love*, it being (as a *Judicious Divine* hath often observed) not so safe for Christians to try their states by the passionate motions of *Grace* in the lower parts of the soul, or the affections, as by the more equal and uniform actings thereof in the will it self; the [*τὸ ὑποκρινόμενον*] *commandress* of the soul.

Voluntas nihil aliud est, quam Intellensus extensus ad habendum & faciendum id, quod cognoscitur.
107.

Baxter's Directions for peace and comfort.
Dire^c. 21.

2. Proposition.

The Acts of the Will (*in specie morali*) derive their *goodness* or *visibleness* partly from the nature of the object, upon which they are fixed. I do not assert this to be the *only* ground, whence they are concluded good or evil, for the principle, and the end, and sometimes the degree of the act, are all necessary thereto; but *only* that this is *one thing* necessary. Thus the *willing of God*, or any of those things, which are in a direct order to his glory, is that, we call *the Grace of Love*: As on the other side, when the Will moveth towards any thing, which standeth in opposition thereto; This is: that we call *Sinful concupiscence*.

3. Proposition.

It is not barely the Object in *it self* considered, but as cloathed with its proper excellencies that agree to it, and all its necessary Relations, which the will in its motions must have respect unto, before any of those motions can truly be said to be *Gracious*: For the nature of Grace lies not in the act or motion of the will simply and nakedly considered, but as it's suited and proportioned to the excellencies of the object, and those Relations which do inseparably belong thereto. For instance, *To delight in God*; It is not every act of delight, which the soul may have upon the apprehension of him; such as a bare Philosophical conception of God, may sometimes raise the heart unto: But when the believing soul, having taken a view of the Excellencies of God, and its own sweet Relation to him, as a *Gracious Father*, is carried forth in a holy rapture and exultancy of spirit. This is the *Grace of Delight*.

4. Proposition.

Though the love of God, and the love of Christ are never found one without the other, yet is there a distinction necessary to be put between them; and that, even as great in proportion; as is between God and the Mediatour, or between the last thing, and the principal means conducing thereto. The love of the soul to God is [*Amor finis ultimi*, Or] of such a Being as it will be an Eternal happiness to be united unto. The love of the soul to Christ, as Mediatour, is [*Amor medii principalis*, or] of one, by whom, we may have access to God, and finde our happiness in him. The formal reason of the former, is the Divine All-sufficiency and Blessedness, but of the latter the personal excellencies that are in Christ, together with his ability and willingness to free us from our undoing streights and exigencies, as we are in a state of Apostacy and elongation from God. And (if I mistake not) the not observing this necessary distinction between the acts of the soul, as respecting God, and the same acts [*in specie*, or] in kinde, as respecting the Mediatour, hath occasioned much confusion in those answers, which are given to this, and many such like inquiries, such Arguments as are onely proper to the one, being made use of to discover the sincerity of our hearts in the other.

5. Proposition.

Love, as it is an act or habit of the will, and hath Christ for its object, is not properly the Evangelical Grace of love to Christ, unless it have respect to him, according to the various excellencies of his person, and the several distinct Relations, which are by God invested in him: Or thus, *The Gospel grace of love, is not the Intensive willing*

willing a naked Christ, but Christ as represented with his peculiar personal Excellencies, and with his various offices and relations unto us in the Gospel. This proposition undeniably follows from the third before laid down: But yet, because it gives some special light to help us to discover the true nature of this grace; and is intended as the foundation of some of those Characters, that will afterwards come to be insisted on, I must crave your patience, while I offer something farther, for the confirmation thereof. That certainly is no true Moral Act, which is not suited to the nature of the object: Thus, for a man to love his friend, no otherwise, than he loves his beast, would not be a true Moral act of love? And again, as plain a truth it is, that where the act of love doth not bear some gradual proportion, to the various excellencies of the object, that it is conversant about; neither can that Act have any Moral truth or goodness in it: For instance, to love God, or Christ, with no higher love, than we love inferior Persons, whether Friends, Relations, or Superiours in the world; This were not Sincerely to love either of them. See 1 John 2. 15. and Matthew 10. 37. and Luke 14. 26.----I add in the last place (which is no less evident, than either of the former) that where there are relations, or Offices necessarily invested in, and inseparable from the person beloved, then if our love doth not respect the object, as under those Relations, and offices, it will be far from being love in Sincerity. Some instances will clear this also beyond contradiction: Suppose a Woman, that hath a Husband, and she loves him no otherwise, than one friend loves another; And the case is the same, between a Scholler and his Master, a Servant and his Lord, a Subject and his Prince. If the affections be without reverence, obedience, and loyalty, will either of these be reputed true love? Why, no more are such to be accounted the sincere lovers of Christ, who do not bear an affection to him, in all his offices and relations: And this I take to be so demonstrative a truth, and of such necessary consideration in our present inquiry, that nothing could be spoken in judgment thereto, untill we had first made our way unto it, and laid it down; I am sure it will be found fundamental to the right understanding the Nature of sincere love to Christ, and the greatest part of the Characters, which are laid down in the Scripture of this grace. It might now be here expected, and it's almost necessary to give some account of Christs personal excellencies, and also of his offices, what they were, and briefly to intimate what new qualifications each of them would put upon a Christians Intensive willing of Christ, which is but the [Substratum or] matter of this grace; But I am not now to discourse the nature of this grace.

matter of this grace; But I am not now to discourse the nature of this grace at large, and so much thereof as is necessary, will come in, when we lay down some of the Characters of it, and I have but two things more, and then we come to them,

6. Proposition.

The love of the soul to Christ in sincerity is not any one *Indivisible act or habit*, but a *bely frame of spirit*, made up of many gracious inclinations, carrying the whole soul along with it unto Christ, for union and communion with him. I told you in the beginning, that it is used here by the Apostle as the *Periphrasis* of a Christian, a Brother, a real Saint; and therefore it is not a sudden and transient flash of the soul, or any one act, but comprehensive of much of that, wherein the nature of Christianity doth essentially lye. This follows necessarily from the last proposition: And indeed to make faith or love to Christ, such single Physical acts, as many do, as it renders the Doctrine of Christianity perplexed, so doth it exceedingly tend to the *amusing* of the Conscience of weak Christians, and I am afraid, *Ingender also to licentiousness*: It being too usual with such persons, who presumptuously conceive themselves to be Christians, because they discern, as they think, those supposed particular acts, to take up with them, and to grow remiss, and careless in other duties, as essential to Christianity, and necessary to salvation, as those graces themselves. To conclude this proposition, you may note, that as love to God, is the *soul's natural piety*, and is incorporated into every branch of it, so is love to Christ the very spirit, that diffuseth it self through, and animates all those duties, which are required by the New Covenant, and respect Jesus Christ as Mediator.

7. Proposition.

When we inquire after this love, by it's *Genuine Characters*, you are not to understand thereby only such special properties, as argue the essence of this grace *a posteriori*; but you are to know that we understand it, in such a latitude, as leaving room for all those arguments by which the Conscience of a Christian may be resolved; whether this grace was ever truly wrought in his soul or not. And these things premised, the Characters which evidently discover, whether we love Christ in sincerity, are these that follow.

1. Character.

We may know it by our former *Convictions*, and the Rule is this;
 1st. 55. 1. & 61. Where love to Christ is sincere, there hath been a Conviction of the souls
 1, 2, 3.
 Mat. 11. 28. undone condition without him, and of the sufficiency, and willingness of
 Christ

Christ, to recover the soul out of that condition; And where-ever this Conviction hath been fully wrought, and the wound made thereby Regularly healed, there dwells Sincere love to him. I put this first, as containing the original birth of Evangelical love. I dare affirm, No contrition, no love; No contrition of heart for sin, no affection in the soul for Christ? Every degree of true Spiritual love (saith a Divine, 1 Pet. 2. 8. that had well studied this point) proceeds from a proportionable Act of saving Faith. And to the same purpose (saith Dr. Preston) and he professeth it earnestly, two things must concur to beget love. 1. The sight of Christs willingness, and readiness to relieve. 2. His ability, and sufficiency to help. These two, willingness, and ability, are the Crown upon the Head of Christ, when undone souls do first take delight in him, they are the sweet Ointments of our Lord, which by their Savour do attract Virgin-souls to betroth themselves unto him. What ever men may vainly talk, 'tis brokenness of heart, and a sense of approaching Ruine, that gives the soul the first occasion of acquainting it self in good earnest with Christ, and when Faith hath thereupon found the suitableness of Christ to it self, in its present state of misery, then the fire of love begins to burn. So that it is not a blind, casual passion, but a matter of right Reason, mature judgement, and choice. It is not a frame of spirit, that persons were delivered into, they know not how, but such, whereof they that have it, can give undeniable reasons, so that if the question were put to any love-sick soul, as to the Spouse in the Canticles, chap. 5. 9, 10. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved?* she could give an Account, if not so Glossie and Rhetorical, yet as Logical and Rational as that, which is there given. She hath seen that in Christ, so much Excellency in his person, and so much readiness and sufficiency, as resulting from his several offices, which hath even ravished her, and made him comely to her for delights, yea, the very chiefest of ten thousands: and therefore she both can, and doth claspe fast about him, and takes him for her Physician, Husband, King, Priest, and Prophet; Since he is willing and fit to be my Saviour, (oh! saith the soul) I will be his Disciple, Servant, Subject or any thing; Thus he can hold no longer but falls down-right sick of love. And this is the first Character. Take it now, and ask thy soul; Didst thou ever yet find thy self lost and undone? not able to bear up against the Terrours of an accusing and condemning conscience; even dying away for fear, lest God should spend all his arrows upon thee, and leave thee a *Horror* to thy self, and an amazement to all about thee? And was it in this dark Valley, that thou camest first seriously acquainted with Christ; and

Cant. 3. 11.
Cant. 4. 3.
Act. 2. 36, 37.
& 9. 5, 6.
Mat. 9. 12.

Cant. 1. 3. 12.
Chap. 2. 3.

& 5. 10.

& 2. 5.

& 5. 4.

Deut. 32. 23:
Job 6. 4.
Psal. 38. 2.

Jer. 31. 20.
Acts 9. 5.

didst thou see his bowels yearning to thee, and that he was fully able to set thee in the light of the Countenance of that God, whose Terror was upon thee? And under this conviction wast thou, that thou didst first close with him? why this is love not in pretence, and complement, but in Sincerity: Whereas on the other side, if thy pretended affection wants this foundation, if it hath been always alike, neither more, nor less; if that senseless conceit runs through thy soul, that thou hast loved Christ ever since thou wast born, and never didst feel the least stirrings of Enmity against him; If Education, Custom, outward communion, be all that thou hast to say to prove thy love; in faithfulness to thy soul, I warn thee to take heed of self-deceit, for surely the Root of the matter is not in thee; and if thou wilt still presume, notwithstanding this confident denial, I have but one word more, and that is to commend to thy serious

See Reynolds
on Psal. 110.
p. 59, 60, &c.
Job 19. 28.

Test of a Christian.
Sincere
love to Christ.

perusal that Judicious Tract of Mr. Pink, on this very Case, and Text; where these counterfeit grounds of love are fully convicted of Insufficiency and therefore I would not do it here again.

2. Character.

Rom. 9. 13.
Rom. 8. 30.

John 14. 6.

John 14. 9.
& 15. 23.

Where love to Christ dwells in Sincerity, there hath been some sensible Impression, Taste, and Feeling of the Fathers love to the soul in him: I do not mean, the Fathers love, as it lies in the womb of Election, but as it hath broken forth in a powerful actual Vocation. The pedigree of a Christians love to his Saviour, is to be fetched from the Fathers love to souls in Christ. 1 John 4. 19. *We love him because he loved us first.* Christ himself as Mediatour, is but a means whereby Souls may come to God their final end, and blessedness; And therefore as the soul that loves him, loves the blessed God much more, so before we can fix upon him with full satisfaction; some beams thereof must light upon us, it being too great a difficulty for the soul to prevail with it, to trust all its concerns in the hands of a Crucified Christ, and to be bound of him, untill it hath gained some sweet assurance of the Fathers love to it self in him. And hence it is that our Saviour tells us; John 6. 44. *No man can come to him, except the Father that hath sent him, draw him.* By coming to Christ, I take it for granted, may be understood, either Faith or Love; And these cannot be without the Fathers drawing, what's that! morally, it lies in the clear discoveries of his willingness to be reconciled to us in Christ; when in Conformity to his being in Christ reconciling the World to himself, he is pleased to vouchsafe us his own beseechings of us to be reconciled, then he draws us. The promise therefore of reconciliation

2 Cor. 5. 20.

reconciliation must first be made known, and by the sweet influence thereof, the soul is allured with Chearfulness to throw it self into the Arms of its Saviour: And this is love. Try by this also; Didst thou ever find those Cords of a man, those bonds of Divine, and Ravishing love, thrown upon thee? Didst thou ever see God to be thy happiness, and offering himself to thee, as such, and so assuring thee? Then thou art Married to Christ, for this speaks thee, *United to God in love*, and the end must include the means, and the greater the lesser.

3. Character.

We then love Christ in Sincerity, when that *affection* in us is *qualified* according to the various Excellencies, *that belong to the person of our Lord*; when it respects him, according to the Manifestation made of him in the Gospel; *viz* not simply as a person, who is *Historically* made known to us by such a Name; but according to the true Character of him, as *God and man in one person*; [*God incarnate*] as one filled with the *spirit of God, above measure, by an ineffable Union*, as John 3. 33. one admirably Condescending, and laying by his divine splendour and Majesty, that he might appear in the form of a *Servant*, and be obedient to the death of the Cross, for the Salvation of Sinners: and lastly, as one raised from the dead by God, made able, and declaring his high satisfaction in the access of sinners unto God by him; And so there are these four graces, which are always attendant upon, and are, (as it were,) Incorporated into the nature of this Evangelical affection. 1. *Humble and Reverent admiration*; 'Tis an *admiring Love*. Objects that are incomparably Excellent, do always first affect with admiration; and though that affection dissolve into love, yet doth it not usually wholly cease, especially if the object be not thoroughly Comprehended: 'Tis thus with thy soul (Christian) that art a sincere lover of thy Redeemer, and hast not set up some *Image, of an ordinary person*, in the place of him, thou admirest him, whom thou lovest, as never being able to comprehend his Glory: The Lord whom thou lovest being *God as well as Man*, and Man as well as God, and all this, in one person: An object in whom Heaven and Earth are so admirably blended together, that the acutest reason loatheth it self, and stands amazed at the Union, whence we find one of the Ancients thus speaking of it, *I know that the Word was made flesh, but how or in what manner this was done, I know not*; Dost thou wonder, that I profess my Ignorance; why, the whole Creation is Ignorant of it as well as I: And another of them gives this advice; *Let Reason go about*

Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8.

Acts 5. 30.

Cant. 5. 16.

Eph. 3. 17.

John 1. 1. 14.

1 Tim. 3. 16.

Chrysostom.

Justin Mart. to cavil? [*whom? (Hocum abest) the person.*] Do not dispute, but apply thy self to the common Refuge against cavils in matters of Faith, even Faith is self: God hath said it, and therefore I must and will believe it; These things considered, I dare boldly tell thee, that thou canst not love in sincerity, but together therewith thou wilt be under a holy rapture of Admiration, and together with thy love, thy Admiration will be always increasing.

Cant. 2. 3.

2. *Sweet and refreshing delight.* 'Tis a delighting, rejoicing love: love (saith *Aquinas*) [*est placencia amantis in amato*] is the rest and satisfaction of the soul in the Object loved; the nature of love lies much in delight. Thou canst not (Christian) love thy Lord, but thou wilt find thy heart even ravished with delight in him; as being one in whom the

Col. 2. 9.

Dominant in locum.

Cant. 4. 5.

substance of the Godhead dwells [*consubstantia*, or] personally [*non per effectum solum aut efficientiam, sed per Unionem Hypostaticam*, or] not virtually, or only in a way of external help and assistance; and being also one that had such an *Unction of the Spirit upon him*, that hath fully fitted him for the delight of thy soul: And hence it is, that we find the Spouse in the Book of Canticles so often letting forth her heart in holy delight to her Beloved, as is manifest by her many loving compellations, and several other expressions (*He shall lye all night betwixt my breasts, Cant. 1. 13.*) too large and many to be mentioned here, and therefore I refer you to the Book it self.

3. *Ingenuous gratitude and thankfulness.* 'Tis a grateful and thankful love; as that which is begotten in the soul by the sense of Christs unspeakable goodness, and condescension, and which is also ever after fed and maintained thereby. Now the condescension of Christ lies in three things.

Rom. 5. 8.

1. In his voluntary undertaking the work of Reconciliation, and mediation with God for persons so unworthy, *Heb. 2. 16.* He took not on him the nature of Angels, but the seed of Abraham; it was the cause of sinners, which this great Lord undertook to plead.

2. In his unwearied diligence, and invincible patience in fulfilling the severe Law of Redemption, which he had submitted to: Though the injury that was done him by man was so great and manifest, and the terrour of the Lord against him also so severe and unspeakable, yet he opened not his mouth, but was dumb, even as a Lamb at the slaughter, and as a Sheep under the hands of the Shearers, *Isa. 53. 7.*

Mat. 11. 30.

Rom. 10. 6, 9.

Isa. 1. 16, 17.

3. In being willing to communicate the benefits purchased thereby to sinful and rebellious men, upon such easie Terms; bidding us do nothing else but turn to God by repentance, and Self-denial, and believe in himself, and

and then what ever our sins had been, all the advantages *merited* by his death should be made over to us. Now when all these are considered (as by every soul that sincerely loves him, more or less they are) do they not sweetly affect with thankfulness, as well as love? Christian, canst thou look upon *such a Redeemer* without some sense of an obligation laid upon thy soul thereby? wilt thou think one single and separate affection enough for him? or rather, will not thy heart empty it self into the bosom of the Lord with love and thankfulness both at once, and each of them contending which shall out-do the other?

4. *Supporting hope and confidence*; 'Tis a *hoping* and *confiding* love; 'Tis not a languishing affection, but that which brings life into the soul from the fulness of that Christ it feeds upon. *Perfect love* (saith the Apostle) *casteth out fear*. There will not be so much as the *shadow* of fear: Joh. 4. 17. upon the soul, when this affection is ripened into perfect fruition: And in the mean time, as the degrees of it do increase, so is the soul heightened in its hopes, and tramples upon its former jealousies, fears, and discouragements. And to this sense some interpret those words, Rom. 8. 38, 39. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* &c. As if they were the exultation of Faith upon the view of Loves Conquest, and victorious Triumph over all its enemies: Love gives confidence of access to Christ, and unto God by him; and this confidence lies in the soul, as a cordial against all its faintings and despondencies; not that there may not be a sinking of spirits, and a *swooning away* for a time, but love will restore the soul again, and knowing Christ to be good, as well as all sufficient for its condition, it will recover life and spirits again, and not suffer it utterly to faint under its own sad apprehensions. And this is the third Character. Take now all these four qualifications of sincere love, and try your selves by them.

Cant. 6. 123.
134.

4. Character.

If our love be sincere, its an affection, which respecteth not a *naked Christ*, but *Christ as Mediator*: Or, it is a hearty desire of, and complacency in Christ in all his Offices, as *King*, and *Priest*, and *Prophet*: And of such moment is the right knowledg of this Character, that (Christian) I must desire thee principally to study it, and pass a judgment upon thy self thereby: For whatever *fondness*, and sudden *flashings* of love thou mayst find within thee, they will not so clearly tell thee what thou art, as the knowledg of thy self by this mark. Take it for a clear Truth, *That if thou lovest not Christ as thy Sovereign Lord*; if thy heart be not knit to him, as thy *High Priest* with God; if thou hast not affectionately,

affectionately entertained him as thy Master and Teacher : In a word, if thou art not consecrated unto God by Christ, if thou art not a loyal subject, and a willing Disciple, love in sincerity doth not dwell in thee : Thou art still an enemy, and wilt so be judged ; 'Tis not fondness of expression, nor any outward complement that men put upon Christ, which reacheth the New Testament notion of love to Christ, but when as loyal subjects, and willing disciples, we are always doing the Things that are grateful, and are obedient to him : This is love. And hence it is, that in so many places, our Lord puts us upon trying our love by our obedience, by keeping his words and Commandments. And speaks of Libertines, Infidels, the carnally wise, Rebels and Apostates, as enemies, and haters of him, what-ever their pretences are to the contrary. And verily, so essential is this to sincere love, that unless you understand it, you will be able to give but a lame account of most of the Scripture-Characters thereof (as if I had time, I could easily demonstrate) because they do all presuppose it. If thou wouldst know therefore whether this Grace be in thee in truth, take thy heart (Christian) to Christ in every office, and try by such Interrogatories, as may result from the consideration of them ; and this will tell thee thy case distinctly. Begin first with Christ as High Priest (for this did lay the foundation of the other two offices ; and if thou hast any love to Christ in sincerity, it was the sight of him in this, that first kindled it). And thus bespeak thy self : Didst thou ever (oh my soul) seriously consider, what Christ hath undertaken in thy behalf with the jealous God, whose face thou couldst not see, and live ? wast thou ever convinced, that all thy prayers, duties, outward privileges, and devotions were little worth, and could not have ought availed thee, unless by his own blood he had first entered within the veil, and made attonement for thee ? And then with the same blood went afterwards to the right hand of God, and put him in mind of his Covenant, to procure actual Grace, and Peace, and Adoption for thee ? And is it a pleasure to thee, as well as thy admiration, to be always musing, and searching what such an Abyss of grace and goodness should mean ? And in the midst of thy musings was it, that thy affections first took this holy fire, and were even surprised into love ? Is it by his Mediation that thou findest thy expectations from God, and thy delight in him supported ? And dost thou rejoice in him, as one whose goodness thou adorest, and whose favour with God, purchased by his own merit, thou admirest ? And therefore art most willing to trust all thy concerns in his hands ? and in all thy addresses to God comest leaning upon the arms of him, as thy Beloved

Joh. 14. 15, 21

& 15. 8 & 10.

21, 23, 24.

1 Joh. 5. 3.

Luke 19. 27.

Heb. 10. 28,

Joh. 14. 23, 24

Heb. 10. 10, 12

1 Cor. 2. 2.

Rom. 8. 34.

Phil. 3. 7, 8.

Cant. 8. 5.

loved Mediator and Intercessour? why thus to renounce our own righteousness, and to feel our hearts warmed into a further estimation of his; to attribute all our acceptance with God to him: Briefly, to be *intensively willing* of Christ, and to look upon him with full satisfaction of spirit in all his Priestly Administrations, This is *sincerely* to love Christ as our *High-Priest*. And on the contrary, to undervalue his blood, either, as *needless* by presumption, or as *worthless* by desperation; to be ascribing to our selves, when we receive any kindness or favour from God; to doat upon our own worth, and righteousness, as that which is sufficient without either Christs Righteousness, Satisfaction or Intercession: This is interpretatively to reject him from being our *High Priest*, and to hate the person of our Lord. Thus try your selves Heb. 10. 13 whether ye love Christ in his Priestly Office; and when you have done with that, take thy soul to the Prophetical Office; and make a further trial, by bespeaking thy self after the same manner. Thus, Didst thou ever (oh my soul) seriously consider that thou wast made for an eternal life, and that none could ever chalk thee out the way thereto, it being only to be learnt in the School of this great Prophet? And thereupon hast thou wholly ceased from listening unto any other, and as a loving Disciple hast thou found pleasure in seeking the Law, (even the word of thy Salvation) at his mouth? Doth thy heart thoroughly favour his Doctrine? and dost thou like the Discipline of his School? Dost thou make it thy study to know, and lay it as a charge upon thy self, to keep the words of this great Master and Prophet? Joh. 14. 23. And even now, that he is gone to Heaven, and hath left his word in the Scripture behind him, and hath sent his Spirit, and set up under-Officers in his School, and precious Ordinances for thy guidance and direction; dost thou value the *Scriptures* above all other writings in the world? and witness thy esteem of them, by thy daily perusal, and study of them? dost thou bear a Reverence in thy breast to all Christs Offices and Institutions? Dost thou account the *mouth of Christ* most Cant. 5. 16. sweet? and even *delight* to hear his voice in the Scripture, and in every Ordinance? and when thou hast heard, dost thou lay up what thou hast Psal. 1. 2. Heb. 2. 1. been taught as the faithful counsel of thy dearest Teacher, and rejoyce therein? More particularly, what is thy carriage towards his Spirit? dost thou hear, when he calls? and art thou tractable to all his *Movings*? dost thou grieve him, or art thou willing to be instructed and guided by him? why, thus to cease from leaning to our own understandings; to give up our selves to Christ, and his Spirit in the Scriptures, and in all the Ordinances of the Gospel, to be serious and willing.

Rom. 6.

ling Disciples of Christ; This is to *love Christ as our Prophet* in sincerity. That is the second office. Once more to make the trial by this mark Compleat, and that will respect his Kingly office: And this is as easie, as either of the former; for our *loyalty and voluntary Subjection to Christ*, as commanding, and governing, this is love; And the hearts rebellion against Christ, rejecting his dominion, murmuring against his Laws, finding fault with his administrations, disturbing his subjects; and disturbing the peace of his Kingdom, envying him the multitude of his subjects, and yielding no obedience to his commands; all these are several branches of enmity against Christ as King, and Sovereign. Put the case therefore home to thy own soul, if thou wouldst not be mistaken, and say, Doth Christ rule within thee (oh my soul) or doth *self*, and Satan? Art thou glad with his Sovereignty, or is it the Yoke thou canst not bear? do the Laws of his Kingdom bear sway within thee, or is it the *Law of thy members*, and carnal self? when both come in competition, whole command dost thou in the course of thy life most commonly fulfill? whose Kingdom art thou most delighted in the advancement of? Is it a pleasure to thee, that thy Lord doth reign, and that his *Throne* is more universally exalted? or else doth thy heart rise against the advancement of Christs Kingdom? In whom dost thou find thy greatest delight? Is it rather in the company of *Rebels*, that would pull the Crown from the head of Christ, than in the *humble and obedient subjects* of thy Lord? dost thou take Christ to be thy *Prince and Sovereign*? and dost thou love the peace and glory of his Kingdom, as becomes an obedient subject of so great a Lord? why this is *intensively to will Christum Regem*, or to love him as King And this is the third Office, and the fourth Character. If you would make sure work, this is a Rule which will not deceive you.

5. Character.

If we have a fellowship with Christ in his honours and dishonours, or in his joys and sorrows, then is our love not feigned unto Christ, but in sincerity. True-love (if I may be allowed so to speak) *mixeth concernments*; my meaning is, that it makes anothers joys and sorrows to be mine, as well as his: they may write *hatred upon themselves*, who are regardless whether it go well or ill, with Christs interests in the world. *No communion with Christ, no love*. Even the personal reproaches and abuses, which Christ indured here below, though so many hundred years since, do yet affect them, and they that love him, have a sympathy with him in them. Neither is it his joy alone that he was personally advanced by being raised again from the dead, and

Luke 24. 52.
Act. 2. 26.

taken

taken up to glory, to sit therein at the right hand of God, but theirs also: Tell a loyal wife, that her husband is honoured, and her heart will leap at the tydings, that are brought to her. 'Tis good news to love-sick souls to hear that Christ is now in Glory, they savour the advancements of their Lord, according to those words of Christ himself to his Apostles: *If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, because I go to the Father, for my Father is greater than I,* Joh. 14. 28. They are glad by Faith to see the Sun of Righteousness after a dark and cloudy morning in his Meridian Altitude. They die, and are crucified with Christ in his death, Rom. 6. 3. Gal. 2. 19. And they feel a reviving of themselves in the Resurrection of their Lord; and hence it is said of them, that they are quickned together with him, Ephes. 2. 5. and that they sit together in heavenly places with him, Ephes. 3. 20. We read of Mary, that she went weeping to the grave of her Lord, but hearing that he was arose, she came away rejoycing: And no other wise was it with his Disciples. Christ doth not triumph alone in his Ascension; but all such as love him, share therein together with him: And as they share with Christ in his personal joys and troubles; so do they no less, when any of his concerns in the world, do either prosper, or else are trampled upon and clouded. 'Tis as the arrows of death to see either his Laws, Ordinances, Officers or Subjects trampled upon. The reproaches of the rebellious world reproaching their Lord fall upon them, and are as so many darts struck into their own souls. This is that, which successively feeds their joys and sorrows, that it goes well with the Militant Church here below, or that a cloud of displeasure and persecution is spread over it.

Joh. 20. 20.

Joh. 20. 11.

compared with Mat. 28.

6.

Psal. 42. 10:

& 69. 9.

6. Character.

Where love to Christ is sincere, there Christ is accounted by the soul to be its Treasure; and there is a longing desire in every such soul of the nearest Communion with him: I put both these together, though there be a very clear distinction between them, for brevity; it is a truly conjugal love, which can neither bear with distance, nor brook any Rival. And this is the meaning of the Spouse in that double expression, calling him the chiefest of ten thousands, and professing him to be altogether lovely. The soul that loves Christ, may love other things, and esteem them lovely; but she will say of none, that they are altogether lovely; but only of her Lord. When one asked Alexander to shew him his Treasure, the report is, that he pointed to his friend Ephection; the Treasure of a soul that sincerely loves Christ; is Christ himself [*Deum meus est omnia*, or] my God is my all, saith the Soul, that

Cant 5. 10. 16

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loves God as his ultimate end. Hence is that of David, *Psal. 73:25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and who is there on Earth, what I desire besides thee* [*Christus meus est omnia, or*] *my Christ is my all*, saith the soul, that is upon inquiry how to find acceptation with God. Whence is that of Paul, *Donbileo I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ*: *Phil. 3:8.* 'Tis the proper Motto of a love-sick soul, *None but Christ*: The sincerity of a Christians love lies in giving a preeminence to the Redeemer, whom it loves above every thing else. The soul that loves Christ, values nothing in comparison of him, no not his own benefits. [*Meretricius amor est, plus anulum, quam sponsum amare, or*] It is a note of a Harlot, to prefer the portion before the person. And that is a no less true than noble speech of the devout *A. Kempis* [*Nihilis amaro non quiescit in dono, sed in Christo super omne donum, or*] The *Worthy and Noble Lover* values not Christ so much by what he brings, as by what he is himself. The soul that loves Christ, loves Ordinances, because they are the banquetting house of her Lord, wherein she is often refreshed by him: she loves the Privileges of the Gospel, because they are the Purchase of her Lords blood; She loves her own Graces, because they are the rare Ornaments which Christ hath put upon her to render her beautiful, and fit her for his own embraces; and yet after all, her language to Christ is, *Not Thine, but Thee*: She will not so value them, as to forget him, that gives them; Christ is her Center, and therefore she rests not, but will lay by, and through all to come to him. She can scarce forbear a fit of Impatience sometimes to think of that distance that is still between them. See *Cant. 8. 14. Make hast my Beloved* (saith the Spouse to Christ there) *and be thou like to a Roe, or to a young Hart upon the Mountains of Spices*; And such another Ejaculation is that, *Revel. 22. 17, 20. where the whole Church is brought in crying to Christ, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*: While our hearts dwell below upon the thick Clay, and have no daily desires to send forth (as Doves from the Ark) for communion with Christ, There is little sign of sincere love to him.

7. Character.

We may know our Sincerity in love, by the value we put upon our selves, as well as upon Christ; if our interest in Christ be the Rule by which we value our selves, that will argue true love; when this makes it day in our souls, that Christ smiles upon us, and on the other side, when this spreads the darkness of the night over us, that he hides

his

his face from us; then we love him. David loved God heartily, and therefore when God smiled, he rejoiced, *Psal. 138*. and when God hid his face, he was as much troubled then, as before delighted. 'Tis thus in every relation, where there is sincerity of affection, as the bond thereof, and a dependance between them, of the one upon the other; 'Tis thus between a Prince, and a loyal Favourite; between a Husband, and a loving Wife; 'Tis thus between the love-sick soul and Christ, when she enjoys him; then in her to light some in Countenance as she is. According to the nature of love; her affections are hardly concealed; they are even too big for her heart to cover, and therefore she can scarce withhold her self from a Holy exultation before every one that meets her. Whereas on the other side if Christ but withdraws, if she falls, and he gives no assistance, if he seems to avoid her Company, and to despise her familiarity, what then? Oh then her Joy is turned into Gilly, and her Plea-sancties into Wormwood; then her Countenance grows dark and sallow, and her thoughts within her are full of horrow, dejection, and confusion: she goes up and down like a person almost distracted, and every place is made to Echo to her griefs, and mourning; she goes from Or-dinance to Ordinance, and from one Watchman to another, and pro-claims to them all the sickness of her Soul; she peradventure she may re- cover again the sight of her Beloved. All this and much more hath in-comparable elegance you may read described in the Song of Solomon. Thus as the Marigold opens to the Sun in the firmament, so doth the heart of a Sincere Christian to the Sun of Righteousness, Christ in Glory.

Where Love is Sincere, the soul will be often on the wing of Medi-tation, and busied in the contemplation of Christ. It's an old Rule and a true one, [*Anima est ubi amat, non ubi animatur*, &c.] The Soul dwells as much where it hath fix'd its love, nay more there, than where it hath its most natu-ral operation. Christ and the Believer that loves him, live as if they had but one soul betwixt them. 'Tis not the distance between Earth and Heaven that can separate them; True love will find out Christ where-ever he is; when he was upon the Earth, they that loved him, kept his Company; and now that he is gone to Heaven, and out of sight, those that love him are frequently sending up their hearts unto him. And indeed they never think themselves Intelligent in any thing that is worth the knowing, untill they have made their souls much acquainted, and fami-liar with their Crucified Saviour, 1 Cor. 2.2.

- There will be a *Willingness to part with all for him*: How many goodly things do persons of all sorts concern for some one thing, which they love? *Amnon, Abab, and Haman*, are three great examples of this: Take but one instance, and it shall be of a Covetous man; Why, he disregards all the learned accomplishments in the World, for a little gain; He thinks himself better, when he hath got that which comes out of the Bowels of the Earth he treads on, than that which comes from the Mansion-house of God, in the Heaven above him: and therefore, how familiarly, and easily will he part with the one to choose the other? no bonds of nature or religion, are enough to restrain him; 'Tis the resolution of a soul that loves Christ, that nothing shall part them, they are habitually Martyrs already, and if he put them to it, 'tis not life is self that they will account too precious to lay down for the sake of him. All the waters and floods of persecution, temptation, and affliction, shall not quench their flames of love, Cant. 8. 7. Witness those words of Ignatius [*αὐτὸν καὶ σώζει*, &c. or] let fire, cross, &c. and all the torments, which by men or beasts can be inflicted on my body, yea and add to them, what all the Devils in hell can do upon it, if it were by solemn sentence of Excommunication delivered to them; yet would I go through them all, to come to the bosome of my Lord.

10. Character.

There will be a willingness to stoop to the meanest offices, for the service of Christ; love (we use to say) stands not with Majesty; it did not do so in the person of our Saviour, when he washed and wiped his Disciples feet; and those that love him will not think it much to conform to his example; they will not think they can ever stoop too low for the sake of him, Job. 21. 15.

11. Character.

- If it sticks not barely in the person of Christ, but reacheth to all; that have an union with him; if it be so Christ mysticall, as well as personal; if you love their persons, their graces, their fellowship, &c. Tell me (saith the Spouse) where thou canst thy flock to rest at Noon? She delights to be led forth with them into the green Pastures of his ordinances, and to feed together with them; If she hath any thing, it's all theirs, who have an equal interest in Christ with her self, she will make use of her graces, substance, and all, that fellow-members may be refreshed. It makes them of Catholick spirits. The Apostle is peremptory, and brandeth them all as Iyars, that pretend to the one

of these without the other. See 1 John 4. 19. & 5. 1. & John 13. 34. 35.

12. Character.

We may know it by its *Concomitants*. Sincere love goes not but in the company of every other grace; It either presupposeth, or strongly implieth and inserteth the *whole duty* of a Christian. [*Diligere Christum* (saith Aquinas) *est Christo in omnibus se subiacere, & regulam Preceptorum ejus in omnibus sequi*; or] to love Christ, is to fulfil the whole Law of Christ; 'tis a most comprehensive grace; 'tis the abstract of the New Creature, the *whole Image of God*: in *one word*; 'tis the substance of the Divine Workmanship upon the soul. They are but *Ciphers*, and signifie nothing in Christianity, who are without it. Briefly, to love Christian, it is in some measure to partake of every grace, and to be a *Christian altogether*.

These are the Characters, some I have omitted, and in others I have been brief, because I would reserve a little room for the second Case: Give me leave but briefly to suggest a few things for satisfaction of one doubt, and I shall presently come to that. Will some say, If this be love in sincerity, *who then loves him aright*? It is no less dangerous to draw out the description of a grace, so as none can find it, than to leave it so, as none may suspect the want or absence thereof in themselves; and upon that Rock, they will tell me I have splitted in the decision of this Case, there being hardly any one that can go from Character to Character, and say after a thorough search, *Now I know that I am a lover of Christ in sincerity*: For answer to which scruple, I shall barely suggest a few Considerations.

1. It is most certain, and notorious, that there is much *counterfeit love* abroad; and it was not the least part of my design to unmask it. Characters serve as well to *convince* the presumptuous, as to *establish* the sincere and upright. There is much in the world, that looks like love, that is not; such are those *Pagans* affections, that are to a *Christ in general*, and not to him, as King, Priest, and Prophet; And those counterfeit affections, which are to Christ upon the *sole Arguments* of Education, Custom, which are as truly in a *Turk* to his *Mahomet*, and serve as well to *justify the Jew in his blasphemy* against Christ, as the Christian in his pretended love of him; for love to Christ, say *Divines*, is not so much to be measured by the degree, and fervour, as by the grounds and motives; And also that barren love, which works up the soul to no measure of obedience unto him; And lastly, that which allows Christ but the worlds *leavings* in our hearts, every thing being constantly,

stantly preferred before him : And what a vast number of persons go no further than these ?

2. Many persons are truly gracious, who yet know not, whether they have any grace or not : It requires more skill to search out the nature of a grace, and to find it in our selves, than barely to exercise it : The former are works of much judgment, and require a deep acquaintance with our own hearts ; whereas to the latter, it is enough, if a person be but of an ordinary understanding, and an honest heart. Besides, Graces have their degrees, like the waters of the Sanctuary, and where grace is very shallow
Ezek. 47. 3. and little, it is exceeding difficult to know that there is any at all : And such persons should do well, who are so weak, rather to spend time in the exercise of grace, than in trying whether they have grace or no ; for commonly it is but labour in vain.

3. There are no souls in whom this grace is really planted, but they have all these Characters drawn upon their hearts to know it by, more or less : I do not say, they can find them in themselves, and know they have them, but only that they have them. And of this I need give no further evidence, than what you will easily find your selves, if you will but study the nature of love to Christ, by the Rule of it laid down in the fifth Proposition premised, and by the third and fourth Characters ; for I am well assured, that Christ cannot be loved, as therein described, unless all these particulars mentioned, be either antecedent thereto, or connexed with it.

And so I come to the second Case, viz. *How we may get our love to him kindled and inflamed ?* And I shall proceed in the Resolution of this, by these four steps.

1. I will discover the danger of being without this grace.
2. I will add some moving Considerations to provoke all that love their souls, to look after it.
3. I will give directions to them that have it not, how to get it.
4. I will add a few more Directions for them that have it, how it may be increased and inflamed ?

I begin with the first, which I will dispatch by these two steps. 1. By discovering the Hainousness of Sin. 2. The Terror of the Punishment due thereto.

Now that you may understand the first, besides what hath been said in the fore-mentioned Treatise, proving it to be a sin against the Fathers love and wisdom, the whole work of the Son, and the special Oeconomy of the Holy Ghost ; I add first, it's a sin utterly subverting the whole design of the Gospel,

Gospel, casting a scorn upon the grace of all the three persons, and not so much as acknowledging what was done by them, as worthy the least acceptance; it writes *vanity* upon all the promises, and is a *frustration* to the design of Christ in that *Noble Dispensation*, there being nothing that he did more aim at, than to testify his own, and his Fathers love to us, and to recover from us our love to them again. Joh. 3. 17. 1 Joh. 1. 3.

2. It is *interpretatively a confederacy with Satan against God and Christ*, Mat. 6. 24. Act. 13. 10. The proper and grand wickedness of the Devil, being his opposition to the design of God in glorifying himself by the salvation of mankind through Christ, which yet so far, as we are haters of Christ, we are in our measure guilty of, as well as he. Heb. 10. 29.

3. It is a *complicated sin; many sins in one*. Such as are *soul ingratitude*; *Rebellion*, it being the casting off the Sovereignty of a Rightful Lord; *Cruelty to Christ*, and as it were, a kicking him upon the bowels, *Christicidium*; and to our selves, Prov. 8. 36. the tearing out our own bowels, with our own hands, *spiritual uncleanness and adultery*, it being Jam. 4. 4. a *treacherous revolting from Christ after profession of Marriage to him*.

4. It is a *sin which opens the door to all wickedness*, Resistance of the Spirit, contempt of the Gospel, and them that bring it, sleighting of Ordinances, Treason against Christ as King, and implacable bitterness and enmity against his subjects, and children. Joh. 15. 18, 19.

5. It is an *irrational sin*, or such for which there cannot be the least *Apology*; because Christ was lovely in himself, did much to ingage our hearts to him, earnestly intreated us to place our affections upon him, sending his messengers to woo us, bestowing gifts upon us, like a King, to oblige us, and making almost incredible offers of much more that he would do for us, yea, finally, threatening us even with *Anathema Maranatha*, 1 Cor. 16. 22. if we withhold our hearts from him; And can such a sin after all this be extenuated? Cant. 1. 13, 4. 5. 9. ad 16. 1 Pet. 1. 4.

6. It is a *sin brought forth, and nursed by the foulest abominations*, such as *spiritual darkness*, and ignorance, Notorious Infidelity, as to the doctrine of the Gospel, Horrible Pride, Self-righteousness, Idolatrous and carnal Self-love. 1 Cor. 2. 8. 5. 43, 44. 47.

7. It is a *sin against all our Covenants and Engagements*, especially our *Baptismal bond*, wherein we did solemnly promise Christ our hearts, and that in opposition to all others; (the bond of *Christian Inguenity, Self-love, and proper Interest, Profession and Relation*, as we bear his Name in the world. 2 Cor. 11. 23.)

8. And lastly, It is a sin utterly inconsistent with the presence of any

one grace in the soul; it being impossible, that any thing should prosper, where this weed hath once settled and rooted it self; you may as well expect to find *branches without a Root*, as the *graces of the Spirit* without love: Thus very briefly you have an account of the danger of being without love to Christ, from the nature of the sin.

2. I argue it from the *Terror of the Punishment*: And certainly the *Just God* hath proportioned the *evil of this*, to the *quality of that*. Study well these few places of Scripture, *Job. 3. 19. Mat. 21. 41. Heb. 2. 3. & 10. 28, 29. & 12. 25. Rev. 2. & 3. throughout.* On the terrors of the Lord, that will one day be *heaped upon* the haters of his Son! See *Rev. 6. 16.* But we need not look any further for this matter, than *into the awakened conscience* of a Rebel against Christ in a fit of desperation: what *Scorpion-lashes* doth such a mans conscience give him! Oh the heat of this burning Caldron! with what rage and fury doth it break forth on every side, untill the Soul is even become a *Hell* to it self! And wouldst thou not love Christ (will enraged conscience then say) so lovely in himself, and so full of love to thee? Couldst thou see him *sighing, bleeding, sweating, dying* for thy sake, and yet not love him? Couldst thou spurn at such *humiliations*, and contemn such *prodigious* mercy? and that when this love would have opened to thee the door of *glory*? how great? how infinite glory? and when the rejecting of it would infallibly plunge thy soul into misery? how dreadful, how intolerable? was ever madness like thine, *oh my soul*, will conscience say? certainly Hell is too easie a punishment for such a *Serpent*, such an *Incarnate Devil* as thou art; well may God rejoyce to be avenged on such a wretch as thee, and make thee to drink up the very dregs of his Indignation; while others that *dwell in God*, shall dwell in love, oh how will God be nothing else, but fury, and wrath and vengeance to thee? Thou shalt one day (and that day such as never shall have an end) hear Justice call upon Omnipotency still to add more flame to thy torment? Thus conscience will look backward, and forward, and even wreak it self with the most dismal flaming language, that it can find out, upon the haters of Christ; And is not that a dreadful sin, which shall thus set a man against himself? and put a sword into the hand of *enraged conscience* to cleave the soul in pieces? And is not that a dreadful punishment, when a man shall become his own *Accuser, Judge, and Executioner*? When conscience shall burn so hot within a man, that he shall be a terrour to himself, and an eternal amazement? And yet alas what is all this to the *immediate impressions of the wrath of God* upon the soul? when

when he that hath said *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay*, shall grasp the soul in his dreadful hand : which might be farther improved, and be demonstrated to be incomparably the forest part of the punishment ; but I come to the second particular, which was to lay down some moving Considerations, to provoke such as love themselves, to love Christ, and besides the particulars last mentioned,

1. Consider 1. Who it is that I plead for this day : Sirs I do not call you to doat upon thick clay, filth, and vanity : I do not plead to gain your hearts to one that is not *worthy*, or hath not *deserved* that you should place your affections upon him ; if you can make either of these manifest, hate him and spare not ; but I plead for one who is 1. glorious, and excellent, if you doubt it, read his Character, *Cant. 5.9. What sayest thou now, is he not altogether lovely ?* is there any blemish to be found in him ? and if thou mistrustest the Judgment of the Church, sure thou canst not doubt of Gods ; Hear this sentence, *Mat. 3. 17. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.* He knew of whom he spake, for he was his Son ; and he doth not say, he was pleased with him only, but well-pleased, i.e. delighted, (See *Prov. 8. 30.*) and satisfied. And was he *worthy of Gods love*, and dost thou doubt, whether he hath deserved thine ?

2. Consider he is one that *died* for thee ; first to purchase thy love, and since is gone to Heaven, where yet he doth not *cease* to call upon thee, and invite thee to bestow thy heart upon him ; were he excellent, but proud, it would be little to thy advantage ; But he stoops, and woos, and intreats thee. 'Tis a day of the *Gladness of his heart* when he prevails but *with one soul* to close with him : And all the rage of his persecutors did not grieve him more, than you will if you stand it out against him. 3. Consider, he is one that hath *the power of thy life and death* in his own hands ; and this is one part of his Covenant, upon which thy life or death depends ; as offered in the promise, so he waits, but as love is the Condition of it, so if thou hearkenest not, thou lovest thy share therein, and what thou chusest, be it life or death, thou shalt Certainly have.

2. Consider, what it is I plead for ; why, all that I ask is love, and will you deny Christ that ? I call thee to *think well of Christ*, to *desire* him, to *take Complacency* in him ; to breathe after union and eternal communion with him ; And which of these dost thou think *too much* for such an object ? or where canst thou place them, more fitly than upon him ? what is he worthy of, if not of this ? did ever *death* content it self with such a recompence ? was ever any debt easier paid ? any service so easily performed, as this, only to love ? hath God made Christ a

Isa. 55. 1.
Luk. 15. 20.
Act. 9. 4.
Joh. 5. 21, 26.

- King, Priest, and Prophet, and is that all which thou must do, to partake of his love in him, to love him in those relations, and wilt thou stick at this? Hast thou any other way to the bosom of God but by him? and yet rather than thou wilt come thither by love, wilt thou damn thy soul by bating Christ? is not the enjoyment of God, worth the labour of love? shalt all go, rather than be saved by love to thy Redeemer?
1. The. 1. 3. 3. Consider, what he will do for thee, if thou art a sincere lover of him; He comes not to court thee, and flatter thee to thy loss, but his reward is great, and he brings it with him. Give me leave to tell thee some particulars thereof; If thou wilt love him, he will betrooth thee to himself in dearest love; He will be thy Bridegroom, and thou shalt be his Bride; 'Tis not all thy filthy garments, Rags, or Poverty that shall hinder, but he will be to thee the Covering of thine eyes: And a gladness of heart shalt thou be unto him, Zeph. 3. 17. Thou shalt be the Joy of Christ himself, for as the Bridegroom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall the Lord thy God rejoice over thee. 2. He will dwell with thee, John 14. 23, 24. Husband and Wife dwell together, and so doth the betrothed soul and Christ. I in them, and they in me, saith Christ; Now this is a priviledg, which carries many in the womb of it, such as are these: 1. Intimacy and daily familiarity, Christ and Christians, take their meals together; there is no Communion so near, as that which is between them. One spirit, 1 Cor. 6. 17. 2. Maintenance, and provision. He is worse than an Infidel, that provides not for his own house. All that live under the same roof with Christ, have their daily bread provided for them at his charges; and he hath said, that he will never leave them. 3. Protection, every mans house is his Castle, they are under safe Covers that dwell with Christ. 4. Counsel, guidance, and direction: This great Husband dwells with all his family according to knowledge, for he teacheth them all his Secrets, and shews them his Covenant. 3. He will Interest thee in all his own Riches, Possessions, and Dignities; together with his person, he offers Heaven and Earth for a Dowry. All things are his by purchase, and thou shalt be a Co-partner or Co-heir with him, when thou art espoused to him. 4. He will manifest the highest Indulgence, and tenderness towards thee: Not all thy crofs walkings (if through temptations it shall so fall out) shall put him upon any more than momentary departure from thee; for he hath resolv'd that his faithfulness towards thee shall never fail, and therefore when thou seemest almost lost, and ready to despond, he will return to thee again, and the more time he hath lost by absence, the more full will his heart be of ravishing love and affections to thee.
1. The. 1. 3.
Rev. 22. 13.
Nof. 2. 19. 20.
Ephes. 5. 32.
Zech. 3. 4.
Gen. 20. 16.
Rev. 21. 9.
Ila. 62. 5.
Joh. 17. 23.
Rev. 3. 23.
Eph. 5. 20.
1 Tim. 5. 8.
Heb. 13. 5.
1 Pet. 3. 7.
Psal. 25. 14.
Rom. 8. 17.
1 Cor. 3. 22.
Ila. 54. 7, 8.
Psal. 89. 33.
Cent. 6. 3.

25. He will turn all to thy good; neither thy sins, though many and great, nor thy miseries, though overwhelming and discouraging, nor nor lastly shall death it self, be ever able to make a divorce between thee and him; but serve as a passage to thee when thy work is done, into the Bride-chamber of thy Lord; and now tell me, hast not thou reason to love him? Rom. 8.28,38 Phil. 1. 21,

26. Consider but thy case, while this Virgin affection to thy Saviour is wanting.

1. Thou multipliest thy whoredoms, and thy abominations continually, for what are thy Intensive willings of other things, but so many acts of spiritual adultery, and base prostitutions of thy soul to thy dishonour and dis-advantage, while other things usurp the room of Christ?

2. Thou art a treacherous Hypocrite and deceiver, forasmuch as thou pretendest to the eye of the world to be Christs, and yet art nothing less than his.

3. You lay a bar in against your selves, and the acceptance of all your duties; when faith works by love, then is obedience illustrious, Gal. 5. 6. and meet for a gracious acceptance; that obedience which owes no part of it self to love, is worth little, and brings in no more than it is worth.

4. You make bonds for your selves in death, and lay up terrible reproaches in the Conscience against the day of Judgment. Job 27. 6.

5. You make your damnation necessary; there being no Congruity to any of the Divine Attributes, much less to the offices of Christ, that that man should ever be saved, who never had any sincere affection to him. These are some of the Considerations, which may be of use to them, that have no spark of love yet kindled in their hearts: There are a few of the other kind, which may provoke to get this love Inflamed where it is, such are these,

Consider 1. The love of Christ to thee was a growing, increasing love; I do not mean, in respect of the basis, but in the outward demonstration thereof. The nearer he was to his death, the more exuberant in love, and when he rose again, his heart did overflow with tender indulgence, as appears by the meltings of his bowels towards Mary, and over Peter; and much more may we believe him now to be full of them, now that he is at the Right hand of God.

2. There is more loveliness in Christ, than ever thou canst find out or fathom; when we have set out our affections to the utmost, there will still be more than we can find affection for; our love to eternity will have something of admiration mixed with it.

3. It's all you can return to him; it's all he looks for at our hands; that which *lies in love*, and which *flows from it*, is the whole, that is required to compleat Christianity.

4. The more you love him, the more lovely you are unto him. Then hath Christ the highest complacency in us, when our hearts are under the greatest Raptures of love to him.

5. It is the honour of a man to love Christ superlatively: It is the sweetest part of our lives, and that which Christ values us more by, than by any thing else: It's Heaven on Earth.

6. According to the measure of your love, so will all the rest of your services and graces be, i.e. either more or less, better or worse. Love is like the Master wheel in an Engine, making the whole soul to move faster or slower. These are the *considerations* of the last kind; will some say? oh, but *what shall we do to get this blessed affection into our souls?* which was the third thing proposed: And in order thereto, I offer these Directions.

1. Direction.

Be well acquainted with the nature of this great duty. The great mistake of the world lies in this; That is thought to be love, which is not, and thence men and women grow bold and confident, and value themselves more than they ought. I have given in my best assistance, so far as the nature of the first Case would permit, to prevent mistakes in this matter before; and therefore I will not do it over again. Only remember, if you would not miscarry, that it is not a *Naked Christ*, but a *Christ advanced by incomparable Personal Excellencies*, and clothed with his offices of King, and Priest, and Prophet, that is the Christ to be loved, and you cannot well miscarry. This is that damning mistake of the world, they love Christ, but not as dignified by God with any of his offices.

2. Direction.

Be much in the study of your selves, what you were originally, and what you are since become through your own miscarriage, wilfulness and folly: Take your souls to the glass of the *Law*, and go from one precept to another, and when you have done there, go to the *Gospel*; And be sure you do not deal *slightly*, but understand thoroughly how much you have offended; And when you have well studied the number and quality of your sins, then consider the justice and holiness of the Eternal God, which you shall understand by the *same Law and Gospel*, where they speak the Divine Terrour against offending sinners; but more specially shall ye know it by going to the Cross of Christ,

Beatum est, qui intelligit quid sit amare Jesum, & contemnere seipsum propter Jesum. A Kempis. de imitatione Christi. l. 2. c. 7.

Christ, and wisely and seriously considering the horroir of that punishment, which Christ there indured? for we never know as we ought the evil of sin, and our misery thereby, until we know what he indured to make an Expiation for it. Do this, and do it faithfully: They that never knew themselves, they are most certain without love to Christ: And it is enough to prove it, because unless this foundation be first laid, they can see no sufficient reason for it.

3. Direction.

Get a true Conviction concerning thy own ultimate end and happiness, Where it lies? viz. not in the objects of sense, but in the Beatifical Vision of God; possess thy soul by Scripture light, of the grand importance of securing thy Interest therein; while you think your happiness lies any where else than in God, it will be irrational to love Christ, because his purpose and design is to take our hearts from the pursuit of all but God: And until you know God to be your happiness, you will never understand the best reasons (that I may not say, the only) that you have to love him. That man loves Christ best, that most fully knows God to be his eternal rest and blessedness, and loves him as such.

Mat. 16. 25.

4. Direction.

Get a Gospel-knowledge of Christ; both what he was originally, and what he hath stooped and humbled himself to be for thy sake; why he came into the world, how he lived and died, and what was the Covenant between the Father and him? how he is exalted and honoured by God? and what great things are promised both by Father and Son to all that in Christ sincerely draw nigh to God. Oh the sweet gales of affection, which by spiritual Meditation upon Christ will begin to blow within us: We cannot muse upon Christs dying, and rising again, and inviting us to love him, but the fire will burn: A considering Faith in Christ will naturally bud and blossom into love.

5. Direction.

Believe the reality of his love to thee: I mean, that he did all that ever he did for thee out of a hearty and real affection to thee; and that he still desires to have the match made up betwixt thy soul and himself: That fond prejudice, whereby souls put discouragements upon themselves, is that which spoils many a match: Do not weaken thy soul by making difficulties where there are none; if thou hearest Christ inviting, stir up thy self (oh thou convinced soul) as if thou heardest him even calling to thee by Name: Believe it, that Christ is never better pleased, than when he is loved; and that he came no less to procure thy love, than to bestow his own. The way to love Christ in good earnest, is to believe that he is so in his offers of grace to us.

6. Direction.

6. Direction.

Understand the world thoroughly, and be jealous of thy own heart therein: Remember that of the Apostle (who knew what it was to love Christ, as well as any man ever did) 1 Job. 2. 15. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* We may well enough add, *Nor the love of the Son.* We may offer to our Lord [*cor tractum*, or] a broken-heart, but we must not presume to desire him to accept our [*cor divisum*, or] divided heart: Remember that Christ and the World are two, contrary each to other, and the single stream of love cannot run two contrary ways at once. *If our hearts be not crucified to the world, the love of Christ will never live within us.*

7. Direction.

Be much in attendance on those means or Ordinances wherein Christ is evidently set forth, and by his Spirit wooing souls to love him. If Faith comes by hearing, so no less certainly doth love. Christ most commonly honours his own Ordinances, and Officers, in making up the match between himself and souls: so he did Paul, 2 Cor. 11. 2.

8. Direction.

Go to God and Christ for love: When you have gotten your hearts well warmed with the use of all the fore-mentioned means, then go to God and Christ, and turn thy Meditations into Petitions. Plead hard, and heartily all those moving Considerations which were set down to usher in these Directions. God *delights to honour Prayer* in this great work of his, in drawing souls to Christ: No Prayer, no Faith: And it is as true, *No Prayer, no Love, no Marriage to Christ.*

I have done with the Directions of the first kind, and have therein almost prevented my self from going any further; it being a Rule in the spiritual, as well as the natural growth, that *we are nourished by the very same, that gave us our first beings.* If we know by what means we came by our love at first, and have but appetites whetted on to a further growth, we need little more. And therefore having first perswaded you carefully to continue to practise over the fore-mentioned Directions, I only add.

1. Direction.

Consider much your own Experiences, and the great advantages you have made by this grace: I need not tell what they are, because ye know them well enough already, and the sense of past advantage will best quicken to future diligence, which is the second.

2. Direction.

Be constant in the exercise of that love ye have: The best way to strengthen

then any habit, is to be often repeating it. *Alls.* We cannot do any thing better to increase love, than to be often *doing* love.

3. Direction.

Get Faith more rooted, and that will make your love to be more inflamed. If you would have fruitful branches, you must keep the Root of the Tree fat; and if you would have any Grace to thrive, you must be sure to strengthen Faith.

4. Direction.

Take heed you be not willingly guilty of any known wickedness against Christ; for this will cause Christ to withdraw; it will occasion in thy heart a jealousy, and that will be an abatement of thy love: Be conscientiously diligent in all known duties.

5. Direction.

Get thy heart daily more thoroughly crucified to the world; and better acquainted with Heaven, and the love of God. The more you love God, the more you will, and must love Christ.

6. Direction.

Be much in the Communion of Saints, and then especially when together with them thou mayest look on, and admire the love of thy crucified Saviour in the Lords Supper. They that are most where Christ is to be enjoyed, love him best; And these are briefly the heads of Directions in answer to each of these Inquiries; They might have been more largely insisted on, and pressed, but this defect must be supplied by your selves.

Remember again, and with that I will conclude, that it is not the knowledge of these Directions, that will advantage you, but the serious and diligent practice of them; And so Grace be with all them, that in the diligent use of these means get and inflame their love to the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

What

Wherein lies that exact Righteousness, which
is required between man and man.

Mat. 7. 12.

Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.

THese Words being brought in by way of Inference from something said before, we must look back a little to find out the relation of them to the former Verses. At the seventh vers. Christ commands to ask of God those things which we want, to encourage us to ask, he promises we shall receive; to induce us to believe this promise, he puts a temporal case; Our earthly Fathers which are evil, give us good things when we ask them, how much more easily may we believe this of a good God, of infinite goodness. Now as we desire God should give us those things we ask, so we should do to others; and not only so, but universally in all other things, what we would that men should do to us, that we should do to others. That men should do unto you; though the persons be express, yet we may take it impersonally, by an usual *Hebraism*, as if it had been said, *whatsoever* you would should be done unto you, leaving the person to be supplied in the largest sense; thus, whatever you would should be done unto you by God or men. *This is the Law and the Prophets*, i.e. This is the sum of the Old Testament, so far as concerns our duty to our neighbour.

The

The Observation which ariseth from the words is this.

The great rule of equity in all our dealings with men, is this, to do as we would be done unto; This Rule hath been otherwise express'd, but not more emphatically in any other form of words than this here in the Text; *Mat. 22. 39. Love thy Neighbour as thy self*; this requires that we should bear the same affection to our Neighbor which we would have him bear to us, but the Rule in the Text expressly requires that we should do the same offices to others, which we would have them do to us. *Severus* the Emperor (as the Historian tells us) did learn this rule of Christians, and did much reverence Christ, and Christianity for it, but he express'd it negatively, *Quod tibi non vis, alteri ne feceris*; Now this forbids us to do injuries to others, but doth not so expressly command us to do kindnesses and courtesies.

In speaking to this Rule, I shall give you,

1. The Explication of it.
2. The Grounds of it.
3. The Instances wherein we ought principally to practice it.

1. For Explication, the meaning of it is this: Put thy self into the Case and circumstances of every man, with whom thou hast to do, that is, suppose thou wert he and as he is, and he were thy self and as thou art; that then which thou wouldst desire he should do to thee, that do thou to him; and that which thou wouldst be unwilling he should do to thee, do not thou do to him. Now this is an *excell* rule, for we are very curious in determining our own privileges, and what duty others owe to us; just so much as we take to our selves, we must allow to others; what we expect from others when we are in such circumstances, we must do the same to them in the like. And this is a plain and easie Rule, many men cannot tell, what is Law or Justice, or right in such a Case, many cannot deduce the Laws of Nature one from another, but there is no man, but can tell what it is that he would have another man do to him; every man can take his own actions, and put them into the other scale, and suppose, if this that I do now to another, were to be done to me, should I like it, should I be pleased, and contented with it; And thus by changing the scales, his own self-love, and self-interest, and other passions, will add nothing to the weight; for that self-interest, which makes a man covetous, and inclines him to wrong another man for his own advantage, makes him likewise (when the scales are changed) unwilling that another man should wrong him; that self-conceit which makes a man proud, and apt to scorn, and despise others,

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makes him unwilling that another should condemn him.

I question not but by this time, you understand the meaning of the rule; but we are not yet past all difficulties about it; Three things are to be done, before this rule will be of use to us.

1. We must make it appear, that it is *reasonable*.

2. Make it *certain*, for till it be certain it cannot be a rule.

3. Make it *practicable*.

1. We must make it appear to be *reasonable*; The difficulty about the reasonableness of it is this; according to this rule I shall be obliged to do that many times, which is sinful, and to omit that which is a necessary duty; I will give two or three instances; *Saul* would have had his Armour-bearer, to have kill'd him, might he therefore have kill'd his Armour-bearer if he had been willing, and had desired it? I may not be an instrument, or furtherer of another mans sin, though I were so wicked as to desire that another would be so to me; If I were a Child, I would not have my Father correct me; or a malefactor, I would not have the Magistrate cut me off; must there therefore be no correction or punishment? Now because of these, and the like instances which may be given, the rule is necessarily to be understood of things that may be done, or omitted; i. e. which are not unlawful or unreasonable; *Saul* might not kill his Armour-bearer, I may not further another mans sin, in the cases propounded, because these things may not be done, they are morally impossible, that is, unlawful; A Parent or Magistrate, may not wholly omit Correction or Punishment, because such omission would tend to the ruin of good manners, and of human Society.

2. We must make the rule *Certain*; The difficulty about the certainty of it, is this; everlasting disputes will arise about what is lawful, and reasonable, and unlawful and unreasonable; Now we must reduce it to a certainty thus; whatever I would that another should do to me, that I should do to him, unless the thing be *plainly* and *evidently* unlawful or unreasonable; &c this cuts off all disputes, for though there may be perpetual disputes about what is lawful and reasonable, or the contrary, yet there can be no dispute about the unlawfulness and unreasonableness of those things which are plainly and evidently so, for that which is plain and evident, is out of all dispute; To confirm this let us consider another Text, *Phil. 4. 8.* Where the Apostle exhorts Christians to follow whatever things are *true*, and *bonest*, and *just*, and *pure*, and as a discovery of what things are such; he adds whatever things are *lovely*, of *good report*, and *praise-worthy*; that is, whatever things are amiable

ble well spoken of, and praised by wise and good men (who are the only competent Judges of these things) if they be not plainly contrary to truth or honesty, or justice, or purity, follow these things; and if this be not the meaning, those words *lovely*, of *good report*, *praise-worthy* are superfluous, and do not at all direct our conversation, which certainly the Apostle intended to do by them.

3. We must make it *practicable*; There are two things which make the practise of it difficult.

1. A seeming *contradiction* in the rule.

2. *Partiality* in judging of the circumstances of other mens conditions and our own.

1. A seeming *contradiction* in the rule; which you will see in these instances; if I desire a thing, I would not have another stand in competition with me for it, if another desire a thing, I would not have him think much, that I stand in competition with him; if I be indebted to another, I would not have him arrest me; if another be indebted to me, I would not have him think much that I arrest him; when we sell we care not how dear, when we buy we care not how cheap; now if this were a real contradiction in the rule, it were impossible it should be put in practice, but it is only a contradiction in our *wills*, which must thus be reconciled to the *rule*.

1. We must consider which of these wills is most reasonable, and the greater reason and equity must carry it, and that which is plainly unreasonable, in comparison of the other, is not to be regarded; If we consider the two first instances, this is most reasonable that where men have an equal right, they should be allowed an equal liberty to use that right; another man hath as much right to stand in competition with me for any thing, as I to stand in competition with him, and to arrest me in case of debt as I to arrest him, and it is plainly unreasonable that I should use this right and another be debarred from it.

2. If both these Contradictory wills be plainly unreasonable as in the third instance of buying and selling, they must be *accommodated* by finding out such a *medium* as is *equally and mutually* good for all buyers and sellers, that is, such a proportion of gain may be taken and must be allowed to be taken, as will be equally and mutually good for all buyers and sellers.

2. Another difficulty in the practise of this rule, ariseth from mens *partiality* in judging of the circumstances of other mens conditions and their own; we are apt to lessen the circumstances of another

mans condition, and to over-value our own; another mans concerns seem less to us than they are, and our own greater than they are. Now this difficulty will most eminently appear in *Cases of passion*, and *interest*, and those *subordinate relations* which are at the greatell distance; another man provokes me; I revenge my self on him; one asks me, would you be contented to be thus dealt withall; I am ready to answer, yea, if I should so provoke another; I aggravate the fault of his provocation, and lessen that of my own revenge, here is *passion*. I desire a courtesie of a man which he cannot conveniently do for me, he denies me, I think much at him, because I judg the *courtesie less*, and his *obligation* to do it *greater*, than indeed it is; here is *interest*. I think, if I were a Father, I should not carry my self so severely towards my Children; if I were a Master, I should give more liberty to servants, and use them with a greater familiarity; if I were a Minister, I should not gall the consciences of people by to free and open a reproof of sin; if I were a Magistrate, I should make other Laws, or punish some crimes more or less, severely: Now if men frequently thus mis-judge, how shall this rule be put in practise?

To remove these difficulties, as much as may be, and to make the practise of this Rule more easie: observe these rules.

1. Labour to understand truly every mans condition, so far as you have opportunity; this is easily said, but how shall we come to do it? Thus, when you are in any condition, observe diligently the motions of your own mind, and how your affections then work, and what apprehensions you then have of things, and what it is that in such a condition you desire, and expect from others; and labour to remember this when you are out of that condition, and to retain the sense which you then had of things.

2. In cases wherein you are unexperienced, and which you cannot reasonably be presumed to understand, partly because of your distance from that condition, partly because of the opposition of your own interest; and partly because of the mists, and clouds, of your own passion; trust the concurrent experience of others, that are in that condition: and think that you ought not to do that to another, which the generality of mankind count grievous, and that fit to be done, which the most, and wisest in such a condition and relation, do usually expect. If men when they are under, and lye at the mercy of others, generally desire that clemency and moderation should be used towards them, how just soever thou mayst think thy severity is, and that thou wouldst be contented, that another should deal so with thee, yet do not trust thy present

present apprehensions of things; but believe that thou wilt have the same sense of things, when they lie heavy upon thee, with the rest of man-kind, and when thou art in their circumstances, thou wilt desire quarter as they do; In like manner, that respect and obedience which Parents, and Masters, and Magistrates, do generally expect (even the best and wisest of them) that do thou pay to them; and though it may have some appearance of rigour, and injustice, yet believe that when thou comest to be in the same relation, thou wilt expect the same things as they do; and that thou dost now judge otherwise, proceeds from thy inexperience, and distance from that condition, or from passion and opposition of interest.

3. Conclude, that in cases betwixt Superiors and Inferiors, the partiality is usually on the Inferiors side; and it is reasonable thus to conclude, both because Inferiors have seldom had experience of the other condition, as Superiors usually have had; a child hath not been a Parent, or a servant ordinarily a Master, or a subject a Magistrate; but all Parents have been Children, and most Masters have been Servants, and many Magistrates Subjects, and so they have had experience of both conditions; And likewise because Inferiors cannot so well see the condition and circumstances of those that are above them, as those that are above can of those that are below them, they have the advantage of ground, and better opportunities of knowledge.

4. In judging of your present condition and circumstances, always abate some thing for the presence of them, and for self-love, and self-interest, and other passions. He that doth not consider how apt every man is unequally to favour himself, doth not know the littleness and narrowness of humane nature. We are near to our selves, and our own interest is near to us, and we see it in its full proportions, and with all possible advantages, other men and their interests are at a distance from us, and seem less to us than they are. Now we must make abatements for this, according to that experience which we have had of our own mistakes, which, if we will observe, as we pass from one condition into another, we may easily be convinced how great many times they are.

2 For the grounds of this, The equity of this Rule stands upon these foundations.

1. All men are equal in many things, and those the greatest things. Now I should deal equally with him, whom I acknowledge to be mine equal. *Have we not all one Father, hath not one God created us? Are we not all made of the same materials? Is it not appointed for all*

Mal. 2.10.
Hob. 9.27.
men.

men once to die, and after death to stand before the impartial judgment of God? We have all the same notions of right and wrong, we are all obnoxious to one another, and may be all beneficial one to another; we all love our selves, and study the advancement of our interest and happiness. Thus far equal.

2. In most of those things wherein we are unequal, the inequality is not considerable, so as to be a ground of any unequal dealing with one another. As to strength of body, whatever the difference be, the inequality is not considerable, because as to the greatest effects of strength there is an equality; every man that will venture his own life, may take away another mans, either by open force, or by surprize. As to abilities of mind (which we usually call parts) there is originally a great equality, especially if that received Opinion be true, that souls are equal; And as the French Philosopher Des Cartes hath ingeniously observed, there is this notable sign of the equality of mens understandings; *Nulla res (saith he) equabilius inter homines distributa est quam bona mens, &c.* Nothing is more equally divided among men than a good understanding; Men will acknowledge others to be richer and stronger than themselves; few will acknowledge others to be wiser, or to have better parts than themselves; every man thinks himself to have so good a proportion of parts and wisdom, that even those who are most covetous, and have the most insatiable desires as to other things, and whom nature could never satisfy in any thing else, yet would not desire to have more wit than they have, or exchange their parts with any man. Now there is no better sign of an equal distribution of things than that every man is contented with his share. Now because all men generally think thus, it is to be presumed that all are not deceived, but that there is some real equality, which is the ground of this conceit. A difference indeed must be granted, but which ariseth usually from one of these two cases, either an unequal exercise of our parts, or an unequal temper of body. Now those who are so happy, as to exercise their understandings more than others, are very often rather conceited that they are wiser than others, than really so; for the greatest Clerks are not always the wisest men; those who are unhappy in the temper of their bodies, are thereby inclined, how weak soever they be, to conceit themselves as wise as others. So that whatever real inequality there be, conceit levels all again. So that whether men be really wise, or only think themselves so, it makes no difference as to mens dealing with one another; for they that think themselves equal, will not deal but upon equal terms. So that Aristotles pretty notion, that wise men are born to govern, and fools to obey;

*Dominus est
alterius vita
quicunque
contemnit su-
am.*

*Dissertat. de
Aetibodo.*

*Qui velis inge-
nio cedere ra-
tus eris.*

Polit. c. 3.

obey, signifies very little in this case, for there are but few such fools in the world, but would govern if they can: So that by virtue of wisdom or parts, no man can challenge a privilege, or prerogative to himself above others, which another will not pretend to, as well as he.

3. *In all those things wherein men are unequal, the inequality is not fixt and constant, but mutable and by turns.* All things that belong to us are either the endowments of the mind, the accidents of the body, or the circumstances of our outward estate; Now those that are most unequal in any of these, may be equal; for the inequality may turn and be as much on the other side. A disease may ruin the most happy and excellent memory, and make a man forget his own name; a little knock on any side of the head, may level the highest understanding with the meanest; beauty, health and strength may be blasted by a disease, or a thousand other accidents; Riches, and Honour, and Reputation are the most slippery and brittle things that belong to us; and when these are gone, friends will fall off, like leaves in Autumn. Now why should I despise another man, when I may be as silly as he; or bear down another by my strength, when I may be as weak as he; or insult over another's poor and low condition, when a day may level me with his meanness, and raise him to be as great and rich as I am?

4. Another ground is, *the mutual and universal equity and advantage of this Rule.* Upon those terms I and all men shall be equally dealt with, it will be well with me, and well with all men. The observation of this Rule would secure peace to the world: and if it were generally practised, those few that should offend against it, would be looked upon as the pests and troubleshooters of humane society. As by the violation of this Rule, every man becomes a *Wolf*, and *Beast of prey* to another, so by the mutual observation of it, every man would be a *God* to another; men would be full of mutual goodness, and pity, and compassion, they would be mutual benefactors one to another. All men would be as happy as it is possible for them to be in this world, and no man could be miserable if it were in the power of his neighbour to help him.

5. The last ground I shall mention is, *the absurdity and inconvenience of the Contrary.*

And this is the most proper way of proving this; for as Aristotle tells us, *First Principles which are evident by their own light, cannot be proved by way of demonstration, but of conviction;* As thus, *contradictions cannot be true at once;* This cannot be demonstrated *a priori*, because there:

there is nothing true before it to prove it by, therefore whoever shall deny it, must be convinced of the truth of it, by shewing the absurdities of the contrary. In like manner this being one of the first Principles of humane society, that we should use no more liberty towards other men, than we would allow them to use towards us; the best way to convince any man of the reasonableness and equity of it, will be to shew him the inconveniences of the contrary. Where-ever this Principle is violated, men will think themselves injured; where men are injured, they will be apt to vindicate themselves; hence comes contention and wars, which loose the bands of humane society; or if a man can pardon an injury, that hath received one, yet he that hath done it cannot believe so, but he will fear revenge; and fear of being oppressed, makes a man seek to anticipate and prevent another, so that every injury endangers the peace and security of mankind, and lays the foundation of perpetual mischief; for by the same reason that I injure any man, I am obliged to ruin him.

He that breaks this Rule, doth what he can to break humane society; that is, to spoil himself of all common protection, and to leave himself to stand upon his guard against all the world; in which state no man can hope to continue that is not wiser and stronger than all the world. Aristotle tells us, *He that desires to be alone, must either be a God or a wild beast*; that is, He must either be self-sufficient, and stand in need of nothing, or else be vild and savage, and delight in cruelty, and mischief.

3. The *Instances* wherein we ought chiefly to practise this Rule, are these.

1. In matters of *civil respect and conversation*, I must treat every man with that fair respect which I would have another to shew to me. We must accommodate our selves to mens particular tempers, and not be froward or intractable, or tenacious of our own humour, especially when it lies in another mans way, but we must be apt to recede and give way, that there may be room for other mens tempers and humours, as well as ours; our humour must not take up all the world. Those who want this *compleasance*, are in society (as one ingeniously compares them) like irregular stones in a building, which are full of roughness and corners; they take up more room than they fill; till they be polisht and made even, others cannot lye near them: so men of sharp and perverse humours are unfociable, till the ruggedness and asperities of their nature be taken off. We must not carry our selves insolently, or superciliously, or contemptuously towards others;

others; we must not be contumelious, nor by deed or word, countenance or gesture, declare hatred or contempt of others. We must not upbraid one another with any imperfection, or weakness, or deformity, we must not peremptorily contradict others, we must not use to talk things displeasing to others, wherein their credit, or relations, or (especially their Religion) is concerned; *Josephus* saith, this was one of *Moses* his Laws (it was a good one whole ever it was) *ἵνα δὲ καὶ ἄλλαι ἀνθρώπων νομίμους θεοὺς μηδεὶς βλασφημῇτω*, *Let no man blaspheme that which other Nations count a God, or make their Religion.* Not but that every man may confute a false Religion, and endeavour by all fair ways to convince a Jew, or Turk, or Heathen; but we may not reproach another mans Religion, or provoke any man in ordinary conversation, by unseasonable and uncivil reflections upon it; for we are with meekness to convince gain-sayers, to reprove men for their sins, but not to upbraid them with them: We must give no offence to the Jew, or to the Gentile, remembering always that the wrath of man doth not work the righteousness of God; and that *Michael* the Arch-Angel, when he contended with the Devil, did not bring a railing accusation against him, he did not revile him; no, not in heat of dispute. And there is great reason why we should thus carry our selves towards others, because we our selves would not be contemned or despised, we would not have any man jeer us, or insult over us, or upbraid us, or peevishly contradict us, or affront us by speaking unhandlously of us, or of our Relations, or of our Religion. Now if we would have others to consider us, we must not neglect them; if we would be taken notice of for some body, we must not overlook others with contempt; every thing thinks it self considerable, and there is nothing comes sooner to us, or continues longer with us, than a sense of our own worth; and we judge ill of human nature, if we think another man is not as impatient of rude and uncivil usage as we are; nothing would be despised, a worm would not be trod upon; nay, men do usually over-value themselves, and are apt to think that they are owners of that singular worth, which may command respect from all men, and that every one that passeth by ought to fall down, and do obeysance to them; they have *Josephs* Dream waking, they think *all mens sheaves bow to their sheaves*; they think every man takes notice of them, and observes their carriage and actions, when probably not one of a thousand ever took them into consideration; or askt who they were. Now we must consider, that it is a hundred to one but there is a little of this vanity in us also, and that we do usually look for more respect than is due, therefore it will not be amiss in our respects

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towards others, *largiri aliquid*, to give men something above we think they deserve, and the rather because civil respect is cheap, and costs us nothing, and we expect from others full as much as comes to our share; for it is a mistake to think that we do but righteously esteem our selves, and that we have no more than a just value of our own worth.

2. In matters of *kindness* and *courtesies*, we must be useful to one another. I would have no man churlish to me, but ready to gratifie me, and do me a kindness. Do I think much to be denied a reasonable favour, and doth not another so too? We would have all men love us, that is, bear such an affection to us, that when it falls in their way, they should be ready to do us a courtesie. We would not have courtesies done in a discourteous manner, extorted by importunity, or upbraided to us afterwards. Let us likewise dispense favours with a liberal hand, and a cheerful countenance, that men may see that they come from a kind heart, and a real good will.

3. In matters of *charity* and *compassion*, if any man be in misery, pity him, and help him, to your power; if any be in necessity and want, contribute to his relief, without too scrupulous inquiries about him; for we would be thus dealt with our selves, we would not have others to harden their hearts, or shut up their bowels of compassion against us. Is any man cast down? do not insult over him, and trample upon him, do not look upon him with scorn, and rejoyce over him in the day of distress. *Res est sacra miser*, Persons in misery are sacred, and not to be violated. When you see any man in calamity, think ye hear him say to you with Job, *I also could speak as you do, if your soul were in my souls stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you, but I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief,* Job 16. 4, 5.

4. In matters of *forbearance* and *forgiveness*; We stand in need of forbearance and pardon from others, from God and men, we should be loath God should take advantage against us upon every provocation, and let fly at us with a thunderbolt every time we offend him. We would not have men storm and fall into passion with us upon every slight occasion; I would have great allowances given to me, I would have my *ignorance*, and *inadvertency*, and *mistake*, and *presens-temper*, and all occasions and provocations, and every thing considered. And when I have done amiss, upon acknowledgment of my fault, I would be forgiven and received to favour. Now if we would be thus dealt with, we must bear with others, the best men need some grains of allowance; *Nullum inquam ingenium placuit sine venia*; no man was ever so perfect, so accomplish'd, so unexcepti-

unexceptionable, but there was some thing or other in his carriage that needed pardon; every man hath a particular humour, we must give some allowance for that; every man is subject to mistake, we must allow for that too; and if a man have committed a fault, we must accept of an ingenuous acknowledgment, and be ready to grant him peace: There is a shame and disdain in human nature of too vile a submission; therefore we must not bring a man too low when we have him at advantage.

5. In matter of *report* and *representation* of other men, and their *actions*. We must not take up a rash prejudice or entertain a sinister apprehension of any upon slight grounds; do not represent any man, his words or actions at a disadvantage; make the best of every thing; A mans good Name is like a Looking-glass, nothing is sooner crackt, and every breath can fully it. Handle every mans reputation with the same tenderness thou wouldst have every man use towards thine. Do not slander or defame any man, or rejoyce to hear other mens miscarriages ript open, do not account it an entertainment to censure and backbite all the World.

6. In matters of *trust* and *fidelity*. Where I place a confidence, and repose a trust, I would not be deceived, I must not deceive another, nor let any man fall that leans upon me. If a man trust me with the management of his business, or lodge a secret with me, or put his life into my power, or commit the care of his estate or children to me after his death; These are ingenuous trusts, and must be discharged with the same faithfulness we expect from others.

7. In matter of *duty* and *obedience*. We must give that honour to our Parents, which we would expect from our Children; and pay that reverence to Masters, which we would exact from our Servants; We must rise up before the gray head, and give respect to old Age? For let not us think, but that the change of *Relation*, and of *Age* will have the same effect upon us, which it hath upon the rest of the World: It is a folly to talk, that when we are *Old*, we shall be pleased with the insolencies of *Youth*; when we are Masters, we shall not be at all offended with the contemptuous carriage of our Servants; that it will not touch our hearts, to have our Children undutiful, and void of respect, to see the fruit of our body unnatural and unkind to us.

8. In matters of *freedom* and *liberty*; which are not determined by any natural or positive Law, we must permit as much to others, as we assume to our selves; and this is a sign of an equal and temperate person, and one that justly values his own understanding and power. But there is nothing wherein men usually deal more unequally with one another, than in indifferent opinions and practices of Religion: I ac-

count that an indifferent opinion which good men differ about, not that such an opinion is indifferent as to truth or error, but as to salvation or damnation, it is not of necessary belief; By an indifferent practice in Religion, I mean that which is in its own nature, neither a duty, nor a sin to do or omit. Where I am left free, I would not have any man to rob me of my liberty, or intrench upon my freedom, and because he is satisfied, such a thing is lawful, and fit to be done, expect I should do it, who think it otherwise; or because he is confident such an opinion is true, be angry with me, because I cannot believe as fast as he. Now if another do ill, in doing thus to me, I cannot do well in doing so to another. And do not say that thou art sure thou art in the right, and he that differs from thee, in the wrong, and therefore thou mayst impose upon him, though he may not upon thee; hath not every man this confidence of his own opinion and practice, and usually the weakest cause bears up with the greatest confidence; now if thou wouldst not have another that is confident he is in the right, to impose upon thee, do not thou impose upon another for all thy confidence. We should rather be modest, and say every one to our selves; *How came I to be so much wiser then other men? which way came the Spirit of the Lord, from so many wise and pious men, to speak unto me? Is it a peculiar priviledg granted to me, that I cannot be mistaken, or are not they most of all mistaken, who think they cannot mistake? If then I be but like other men, why should I take so much upon me, as if my understanding were to be a rule, and my apprehensions a standard to the whole world? As if when another man differs from me, I did not differ as much from him: why may not another man understand the thing better than I do, or what crime is it if he understand them not so well? Were all mens understandings cast in the same Mould? Is it presumption for any man to know more than I do, or a sin to know less? Job doth well reprove this self-conceit, Job 12: 2, 3. His friends would needs bear him down, and were very angry with him that he was not of their mind, and would not acknowledg all to be true of himself which they said against him, he takes them up sharply; No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom shall ope with you; but I have understanding as well as you, and I am not inferiour to you, who knoweth not such things as these? Let not any man think that he hath ingrossed all the knowledge of the world to himself, but others know the same things which he doth, and many things better than he.*

9. In matters of Commerce and Contracts, which arise from thence: Now a contract is a mutual transferring of right: when I buy any thing of another, he makes over the right of such a Commodity to me for so much

much money, or other valuable thing, the right whereof I make over to him. Now in this kind of intercourse, we are to be governed by this great Rule. In *making* of contracts we must *agere bonâ fide*, deal honestly and truly: in *performing* of contracts we must give *liberare fidem*, satisfy the engagement we have made, for thus we our selves would be dealt withal.

Now if any shall desire to be more particularly satisfied, *What that exact Righteousness is, which in matter of Contracts, ought to be observed betwixt man and man?* I must confess this is a difficult question, and to be handled very modestly, by such as acknowledg themselves unacquainted with the affairs of the world, and the necessities of things, and the particular and hidden reasons of some kind of dealings: For he that is ignorant of these, may easily give Rules, which will not comply with the affairs of the world, he may complain of that which cannot be otherwise, and blame some kind of dealings, which are justifiable, from particular reasons, not obvious to any man, who is unseen in the way of Trade. Besides, there are many Cases fall under this question which are very nice, but of great consequence, and the greater caution and tenderness ought to be used in the resolution of them, because they are matters of constant practise, and the greatest part of mankind are concerned in them; now it is a dangerous thing, to mistake in those things, in which many persons are interested, especially if they be things of such a vast difference, as *Good*, and *Evil*, *Right*, and *Wrong* are: For if that be determin'd to be lawful, which is unlawful, men are *led into Sin*; if that be determined to be unlawful, which is lawful, men are *led into a Snare*; for if this determination be to the prejudice of men in their callings, it is an hundred to one, but common example and private interest, will make many continue in that practise; and then the mischief is this, though men do that which is lawful and right, yet they are staggered by the authority and confidence of him, who hath determin'd it unlawful; and so have some reluctancy in their Consciences in the doing of it, and this by accident becomes a great sin to them; and when upon a Sick-bed, or any other occasion, they come to be touched with the sense of sin, this will be matter of greater horror and affrightment to them, than a real sin which they committed ignorantly, and were afterwards convinced of. Upon all these Considerations, I ought to proceed with great wariness, in the answering of this question, therefore I shall content my self with speaking those things which are clear and evident, though they be but general, rather than venture out of my depth, by descending into particulars, and such things as are out of my notice.

I shall

- I shall therefore
1. Lay down the General Rule.
 2. Some Propositions which may tend to the explication of it.
 3. Some special Rules, for the directing of our Commerce and intercourse.

1. The general Rule is this; That which it is not unreasonable for me to desire to gain by another, when I am to sell, that I should allow another to gain by me, when I am to buy; and that which it is not unreasonable, another should gain by me, when I am to buy, that, and no more I may gain by another, when I am to sell.

2. The Propositions, which I shall lay down, for the further explication of this Rule, are these,

1. In Buying and Selling, such a proportion of gain may be taken, and ought to be allowed, as is mutually and universally best. And this every man is presumed to desire, because this will be certainly good for every one, whereas if it be not universally good, it may be bad for any one, if it be not mutually so, it will be bad for me by turns.

2. That proportion of gain which allows a reasonable compensation for our times, and pains, and hazard, is universally and mutually best. If the compensation be unreasonably great, it will be bad for the buyer, if unreasonably little, it will be bad for the seller, if equal, and reasonable, it will be good for all.

3. That proportion of gain, which in common intercourse and use of bargaining among those who understand what they buy and sell, is generally allowed; ought to be esteemed a reasonable compensation. This is evident, because the common reason of mankind doth best determine what is reasonable; Therefore those who speak of commutative justice, and place it in the equality of things contracted for, need explaining, for value is not a thing absolute and certain, but relative, and mutable: Now to fix the value of things as much as may be, this Rule is commonly given, *Tanti unumquodque valeat, quanti vendi potest*, Every thing is worth so much as it may be sold for, which must not be understood too particularly, as if the present and particular appetite of the Contractor were to be the Rule, for every thing is not worth so much as any body will give for it, but so much as in common intercourse among knowing persons it will give. For this I take for a truth, that in the ordinary plenty of commodities, there is an ordinary and usual price of them known to the understanding persons of every profession; If I be out in this, the matter of gain will be more uncertain than I thought on.

4. A reasonable compensation doth not consist in an indivisible point, but hath a certain

a certain latitude which likewise is to be determined by the common intercourse and practice of mankind. Suppose ten in the hundred be the usual gain made of such a commodity, eleven the highest, nine the lowest; the latitude is betwixt nine and eleven.

5. Every man engaged in a way of Commerce, is presumed to understand, unless the contrary be evident. So that keeping within the latitude of a lawful gain, I may use my skill against another man in driving a bargain. But if his want of skill be evident (that is) sufficiently known to me, I must use him as I would do a child, or other unskillful person, that is, fairly.

6. Where the price of things alters (as it often doth almost in all things) no other Rule can be given but the common and market-price. There are some things which are fixedly certain, as Coins; there I have no latitude at all; I may not put off a piece of money for more than its value, though a person out of ignorance would take it for more; There are some commodities which in ordinary plenty bring of an ordinary goodness, have an usual price; here I have but little latitude, viz. that of the market: In the rising and falling of Commodities, I have a greater latitude, but usually in these cases the Market sets some kind of price; unless I be the sole Master of a commodity, and here the latitude is the greatest, and my own reason and moderation must limit me: And if any ask why I make the Market the Rule, seeing this seems to be as if I should say, Let every man get as much as he can, for so men in the Market do; I answer, The Market is usually more reasonable than the particular appetites of men; and though every man be apt to get as much as he can, yet men generally have an appetite to sell, as well as to sell dear, and that checks this, and men are brought to moderation, because they are unwilling to lose custom; so that he that governs himself by the Market-prizes, not catching at particular advantages, seems to me to follow the safest Rule.

7. There are some things allowed in common intercourse, which are so rigorous, that they are hardly just, which are rather tolerable than commendable. I will give one instance instead of many: A man hath a small piece of ground lying within another mans estate, he is willing to sell, but requires (possibly) forty or sixty years purchase, or more, according to the particular appetite of the purchaser: This seems not to be so agreeable to this great rule of equity; I do not see but some advantage may be made in this case, and I will not set any peremptory limits; I shall only say this in general, we should set a moderate value upon another mans appetite and convenience.

8. It is also to be feared, that something very like unrighteousness, is woven into

the mystery of most Trades. And like Phidias his Image in Minerva's shield, cannot be defaced without the ruin of it. I think this is not a groundless jealousy, but the confession & complaint of the most knowing and understanding persons in human affairs. I shall instance only in the sleightness of work, the imbalancing of Commodities, and setting them off by indirect advantages. I can only bewail this, for unless the world could generally be convinced of this, it is not like to be amended. Perfection is not to be looked for in this imperfect state, we must be content if things are passable.

9. Nevertheless we ought to aspire after as great a degree of Righteousness, and Equity, as the condition of humane affairs will admit. We should bend all our endeavours to the bettering of the World, and not only avoid all unrighteousness, but draw back as much as in us lies, from the indirect practices of the World, and from all appearance of unrighteousness.

3. The more Particular Rules are these.

1. Impose upon no mans ignorance or unskilfulness. Thou mayest set a just value upon thine own Commodity, but not a price upon another mans head. I mean, thou mayest not rate a mans want of understanding, or set a tax upon his ignorance; therefore take no advantage of Children, or any other incompetent persons, and do not only use them with justice, but with ingenuity, as those that repose a trust in you, and cast themselves upon your equity. And here are some questions to be resolved.

Quest. 1. If a man be otherwise skilful in his calling, may not I take advantage of his ignorance of a particular circumstance wherein the contract is concerned?

Ans. I will tell you how Tully resolves this in a particular case: *De Officiis*. 1. 3. man (saith he) brings a Ship of Corn from Alexandria to Rhodes, in a time of great Famine, he may have what price he will, he knows of a great many more Ships that will be there next day, may he conceal this from the Rhodians? He determines peremptorily he may not. If we will be worse than Heathens---I say no more.

Quest. 2. But may we not take advantage of the ignorance of the seller, though not of the buyer? The difference is, he that offers to sell any thing at such a price, is willing so to part with it; now there is no wrong done to him that is willing.

I answer, A man is so far willing, as he is knowing; Aristotle tells us, That ignorance is a sort of unwillingness. If a man out of forgetfulness, or want of consideration, or sufficient understanding of his own calling, mistake himself, I may not make a prize of this mans weakness; for he is only willing to sell it so upon supposition he remembers right, and understands himself aright, but the thing being really worth more, he is absolutely unwilling, and I am injurious to him in taking advantage.

Quest.

Quest. 3. *May I not sell secret faults and vices in a commodity?*

Ans. If the faults be such as men take for granted do often happen, and notwithstanding them, they do not account any man to have deceived them, then they are faults pardoned by common consent; but if they be such as I am grieved at, and think my self not fairly dealt withall when they happen, then some think it is enough to allow for them in the price, but I think Tully hath determined it better, *Ne quid omnino quod venditor novit emptor ignoret, That the buyer should not be left ignorant of any thing that the seller knows*: And this seems reasonable, for I know not but another man may value those faults higher than I do; however it is not so fair for me to make another mans bargain.

2. *Impose upon no mans necessity.* If a man must needs buy now, or of thee, because none else is neer, make no advantage of this.

3. *When Gods providence hath put into thy hands some great opportunity and advantage* (as by the intervention of some unexpected Law, by a sudden War or Peace betwixt Nations, or by some other casualty) do not stretch it to the utmost. *Fortunam reverenter habere, Use this providential advantage modestly*, considering that he whose blessing gave thee this opportunity, can blast thee a thousand ways.

4. *Use plainness in all your dealings*: This the Roman Lawr called *bona fide agere*; Do not disparage another mans commodity, or raise your own besides truth, this is sinful; do not insinuate a commendation or disparagement indirectly, thereby to lead a man into an error, that you may draw on a bargain the more easily; do not (as your phrase is) ask or bid much out of the way, for if this be not simply unlawful, yet it doth not become an honest man: We commend the *Quakers*, because they are at a word in all their dealings; we would be loath not to be counted as good Christians as they are, let us then do as good things as they do, especially when we account those things praise worthy, and I am sure this is no ways contrary to Justice, and Honesty, and Truth: I know nothing that gives so real a reputation to that Sect, as this practice, and would it not adorn those who account themselves the more sober Christians: if we praise this in others, let us practise it in our selves. We are apt to value our selves much by our *Orthodox Judgments*, but let us take heed that *Secularies* do not confute us by their *Orthodox lives*. For the sake of Religion, Next to your Consciences, in all your dealings, tender your reputation, for, *quod conscientia est apud Deum, id fama est apud homines, that which conscience is in reference to God, that our reputation is in respect of men.*

5. *In matters of vanity and fancy, and things which have no certain estimation, use moderation*; and so much the rather, because in these thou art left to be thy own Judge.

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6. Do not go to the utmost of things lawful. He that will always walk up-on the brink, is in great danger of falling down: he that will do the utmost of what he may, will sometime or other be tempted to what he should not; for it is a short and easie passage from the utmost limits of lawful, to what is evil and unlawful, therefore in that latitude which you have of gain, use favour towards the poor and necessitous, ingenuity towards the ignorant and unskilful, moderation towards all men.

7. Where you have any doubt about the equity of dealings, chuse your safest port, and that which will certainly bring you peace? For not only a good Conscience, but a quiet Conscience is to be valued above gain. Therefore in matters of duty do the most, in matters of priviledge and divisions of right, and proportions of gain (where there is any doubt) chuse the least, for this is always safe.

Thus I have laid down the Rule and explained it, and have given as particular directions, as I could safely adventure to do; I must now leave it to every man to apply it more particularly to himself, and to deal faithfully with his own Conscience, in the use of it. Circumstances which vary Cases are infinite, therefore when all is done, much must be left to the Equity and Chancery of our own Breasts. I have not told you how much in the Pound you may gain, and no more, nor can I: A man may make a greater gain at one time, than another, of the same thing; he may take those advantages which the change of things, and the providence of God gives him, using them moderately: A man may take more of some persons than of others; provided a man use all men righteously, he may use some favourably. But I have on purpose forbore to descend to too many particularities, among other reasons, for the sake of Sir Thomas More's observation concerning the Casuists of his time, who (he saith) by their too particular resolutions of Cases, did not teach men *non peccare, not to sin*, but did shew them *quàm propè ad peccatum liceat accedere sine peccato, how near men might come to sin, and yet not sin*.

The Uses I shall make of all this, are these two.

1. Use.

Let us not revenge our selves; The Rule is not, we should do to others as they do to us, but as we would have them to do to us: as if it were on purpose to prevent revenge. Saint Luke forbids revenge from this rule; Luk. 6. 31, 32. For if you love them that love you, &c. But love your Enemies. Revenge is the greatest offence against this rule, for he that revengeth an injury, hath received one, he that hath received one, knows best what that is, which he would not have another to do to him; the nature of evil and injury is better known to the patient, than to the agent,

agent, men know better what they suffer, than what they do, he that is injur'd feels it, and knows how grievous it is, and will he do that to another?

2. Use.

Let me press this rule upon you; Live by it, in all your carriage and dealings with men, let it be present to you. Ask your selves upon every occasion, Would I that another should deal thus with me, and carry himself thus towards me? But I shall press this chiefly, as to justice and righteousness in our commerce. It is said that *Severus* the Emperor caused this rule to be written upon his Palace, and in all publick places; Let it be writ upon our Houses and Shops, and Exchanges. This Exhortation is not altogether improper for this Auditory; you that frequent these Exercises seem to have a good sense of that part of Religion, which is contained in the first Table; do not by your violations of the second, marre your obedience to the first; do not prove your selves Hypocrites in the first Table, by being wicked in the second; give not the World just cause to say, That you are ungodly because they find you to be unrighteous, but manifest your love to God, whom you have not seen, by your love to your Brother whom you have seen; and if any man wrong his Brother, he cannot love him. Do not reject or despise this Exhortation; under the contemptuous name of *Morality*. Our Saviour tells us, this is a chief part of that which hath ever been accounted Religion in the World, *It is the Law and the Prophets*; and he by joyning it hath adopted it into Christianity, and made it Gospel. We should have an especial love to this precept, not only as it is the dictate of Nature, and the Law of *Moses*, not only as it is a Jewish, and Gentile principle, but as it is of the *Household of Faith*. When the young man told Christ, that *he had kept the Commandments from his youth*, it is said *Jesus loved him*; vvhereever we have learned to despise *morality*, *Jesus loved it*: When I read the Heathen vvriters, especially *Tully* and *Seneca*, and take notice what precepts of morality, and Laws of kindness are every where in their writings, I am ready to fall in love with them. How should it make our blood to rise in many of our faces who are Christians, to hear with what strictness *Tully* determines cases of Conscience, and how generously he speaks of equity and justice towards all men. *Societatis arclissimum vinculum est magis arbitrari esse contra naturam, hominem homini detrabere sui commodi causâ, quam omnia incommoda subire*; This is the strongest bond of society, to account it to be more against nature,

Lampidius.

Mark 10. 20, 21.

Offic. Lib. 3.

nature, for any man to wrong another for his own advantage, than to undergo the greatest inconveniences. And again, *Non enim mihi est vita mea utilior, quam animi talis affectus, neminem ut violem commodi mei gratia.* Nor is my life more dear and profitable to me, than such a temper and disposition of mind as that I would not wrong any man, for my own advantage. Again, *Tollendum est in rebus contrabendis omne mendacium* No kind of lying must be used in bargaining. And to mention no more; *Nec ut emat melius, nec ut vendat quicquam simulabit; aut dissimulabit vir bonus;* A good man will not counterfeit, or conceal any thing, that he may buy the cheaper, or sell the dearer. And yet further to check our proneness to despise Moral Righteousness, I cannot but mention an excellent passage to this purpose, which I have met with, in a Learned man of our own Nation. Two things (saith he) make up a Christian, a true Faith, and an honest Conversation, and though the former usually gives us the Title, the latter is the surer; for true Profession without an honest Conversation, not only saves not, but increases our weight of punishment; but a good life without true profession, though it brings us not to Heaven, yet it lessens the measure of our judgement, so that a Moral man so called is a Christian by the surer side. And afterwards, I confess (saith he) I have not yet made that proficiency in the Schools of our Age, as that I could see why the second Table, and the Acts of it are not as properly the parts of Religion and Christianity, as the Acts and observation of the first; if I mistake, then it is Saint James that hath abused me, for he describing Religion by its proper Acts tells us, That pure Religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father is this, to visit the Fatherless and the Widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unsport from the World; so that that thing which in an especial refined Dialect of the new Christian Language, signifies nothing but Morality and Civility, that in the Language of the Holy Ghost imports true Religion, Mark 12. 33, 34. When the Scribe told Christ, that to love God with all the heart, &c. And our neighbour as our selves, was more than whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices; it is said; when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, thou art not far from the Kingdom of God. They that would have a Religion without Moral righteousness, talk indifferently, and are farther from the Kingdom of God than a mean Moral man. If we neglect this part of Religion, we disparage the Gospel, and abuse our profession, we are but pretenders to Christianity. Plutarch speaks somewhere to this purpose, he had rather posterity should say, There was never such a man as Plutarch, than that he was a vicious, or cruel, or unjust man.

Mr. Hales.

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I had rather a man should not call himself a Christian, that he should renounce his Title, than that by his life and actions, he should represent Christians to the world; as oppressors, as unjust, and treacherous dealers. If men will only use Religion for to cover their unrighteousness, I had rather they would put off their cloaks, and be knaves *in quo*, that every body may know them, than that they should go like High-way-men in Vizards and Disguises, only that they may rob honest men the more securely.

And to move you to the practice of this Rule, I shall only offer to you one Consideration, but which hath so much weight in it, that it may be instead of many; *As you deal with others, so ye shall be dealt with.* With what measure you mete to others, it shall be measured to you, is a proverbial speech often used by our Saviour, and which one time or other you will find to be very significant. God doth many times by his providence order things so, that in this life mens unrighteousness returns upon their own heads, and their violent dealing upon their own pates; There is a Divine Nemesis, which brings our iniquities upon our selves. No man hath any vice or humour alone, but it may be matched in the world, either in its own kind, or in another; if a man be cruel and insolent, *A Bajazet shall meet with a Tamberlane*; if a man delight to jeer and abuse others, *no man hath so good a wit, but another hath as good a memory*; He will remember it to revenge it; He that makes a trade of deceiving and cozening others, he doth but teach others to cozen him; and there are but few Masters in any kind but are out-done by some of their Schollars. But however we may escape the hands of men, how shall we escape our own Consciences, either trouble of Conscience in this life, or the worm of Conscience in the next? how shall we escape the hands of the living God? how shall we escape the Damnation of Hell? *1 Thess. 4. 6. Let no man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter, for God is the avenger of all such.* He will take their cause into his own hands, and render to us according to our fraudulent and cruel dealing with others, *Matth. 18. 35. So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you, &c.* What our Saviour saith, *Mat. 19. 29.* That there is no man that denies himself in Houses or Lands, &c. for Christs sake and the Gospels, but shall receive in this life a hundred-fold, and in the world to come everlasting life, is true also here. There is no man that is injurious to his Brother in houses, or lands, or good name, or any other thing, but shall probably receive in this world an hundred-fold; however (without repentance) in the world to come, everlasting misery. In the next world?

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men will find, that they have but impoverished themselves by their ill-gotten wealth, and heaped up for themselves treasures of wrath; Read those words and tremble at them, *Jam. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for your misery shall come upon you, &c.*

Let us then be perswaded, as we love God whom we have not seen, as we love the Gospel which we read and hear every day, and would preserve the reputation of it; as we would better the world, and the condition of mankind; as we love our selves and our own peace and happiness, to deal justly and equally with all men. Till we come to live by this Rule of Equity, we can never hope to see the world a quiet habitation. But if this were practised among us, then *Glory would dwell in our Land, Mercy and Truth would meet together, Righteousness and Peace would kiss each other, Truth would spring out of the Earth, and Righteousness would look down from Heaven; yea the Lord would give that which is good, and our Land would yield her increase, Righteousness would go before him, and set us in the way of his steps.*

*Psal. 185. 9,
10, 11, 12, 13.*

After



After what manner must we give Alms,
that they may be acceptable and pleasing
unto God?

1 Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate:

Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal life.

THe sum of these words is a Direction for rich men how to make the best use of their riches. The ground or occasion of this Direction, is to meet with an Objection, which might be made against the discommodities and dangers of Riches, noted before in ver. 9, 10. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare; and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. v. 10. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. From hence some might infer, as the Disciples did from the inseparable and inviolable bond of Marriage, noted by our Saviour, Mat. 19. If, say they, the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. So might some say, if they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, &c. then it is not good to be rich; yea such as are rich men say, Let us give away, or cast all that we have, rather than retain such Vipers, as Riches seem to be.

To prevent such inconsequent inferences, the Apostle giveth this Direction, whereby he sheweth that Riches may be well used, and being

Luk. 16. 9.

being well used, be a means of helping on our Eternal salvation. Learn hence not to condemn things good in themselves, because of the abuse of them. The Lord in regard of the ordinary abuse of Riches, styleth them *Mammon of unrighteousness*, and yet adviseth not thereupon to cast them away, but to *make to our selves friends thereof*; that is, so to use them, as the good works done by them, may, as friends before the Judge give evidence of the truth of our Faith and Love, and shew that we are of the sheep of Christ; for whom Eternal life is purchased.

Having thus shewed the occasion and dependance of these words upon the former, come we now to the Logical resolution of them, where we may observe two parts.

1. A Prohibition. 2. An Injunction.

A Prohibition of hurtful Vices.

An Injunction of needful Virtues.

The vices are two, } 1. High-mindedness.
 } 2. Vain-confidence.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches. The Virtues are likewise two.

1. Confidence or Faith in God; but trust in God, which is urged by an Argument taken from Gods bounty, in these words, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*.

2. Charity towards Men, expressed in several phrases, viz. *by doing good, and by being rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate*; which duties are enforced by an Argument taken from the benefit of performing them, which is, in brief, assurance of Eternal life, implied in these words, *Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal life*.

I shall briefly speak something to the several branches of the Text, as they lye in order, and then come to the Question or Case of Conscience given unto me to handle:

Charge them that are rich in this world: The expression of our Apostle is here observable, in that he saith not *ἀλλὰ* speak to them, not *ἀλλὰ*, declare to them, but *παροτρύνω*, charge, command them. Well did the Apostle know how forward on the one side rich men are to be high-minded, and to trust in their riches; and on the other side, how backward they are to trust in God, and to shew charity to the poor, and thereupon saw it requisite that a Minister should take courage to himself, and not think it enough, closely to intimate to rich men, what Vices they are addicted to, or what Virtues they are bound unto, but, remembering the place wherein they stand, which is Gods, in the Name

Name of his most excellent Majesty, to require, charge and command them to forbear the one, and indeavour after the other.

In the next place follows the parties to whom this charge is to be given, namely, To the rich in this world, *Charge them*, saith the Apostle, *who are rich in this world*, that is, in this present world; noting our riches to be only for this world; for true is that Proverb of the Wise-man, *Riches are not for ever*, they cannot be carried out of this world. *As naked we came into this world, so naked shall we go out of it.* Prov. 27. 24. Job 1. 21. And therefore it must needs be a point of great wisdom by that which is but for this present world, to store up a sure foundation for the time to come.

In the next place follows the Vices here forbidden, the first is, *High-mindedness*, whereunto rich men are very prone, in that their wealth is as wind, and though wind be but a vapour, yet it puffeth up exceedingly, as we see in a bladder blown up with wind. In like manner, Riches, though they be but *meer vanity*, as the wise man expresseth it, yet are they apt to puff up men extremely, even to think of themselves above what is meet. Whereas if rich men would but well weigh, that they came from, and must return to the same mould that others do; *for dust they are, and to dust they must return*; Yea, if they would consider, that they came from the same cursed stock that others do, and are by nature no better than the meanest; especially if they would consider, that outward riches cannot add the least dram of real worth to the owners of them; but though they may be more honourable parts or members in the civil body of the state, yet in the mystical body of Christ they may be less honourable than the poor; I say, if rich men did but seriously consider these things, they would not be so high-minded as they are. Eccles. 1. 2. Gen. 3. 19.

The other Vice here forbidden unto rich men, is, *Vain-confidence*, or *trusting in their riches*, and this is very fitly joyned to the former; for where our pride is, there will be our confidence. That rich men are apt to put too much trust and confidence in their riches, doth appear by the titles which they commonly give unto them, calling them *their goods*, as if they were the only good things; and *their substance*, as if all things else were shadows; and by the increase of them, they say they are made for ever, and by the loss of them, they say they are utterly undone. What do these expressions imply, but a trust and confidence in their Riches; whereupon saith the Wise-man, *The Rich mans wealth is his strong City, and as an high wall in his own conceit.* It makes him think himself so safe and secure, that like the Judg mentioned by our Saviour, *he feareth not God, nor regardeth man.* Prov. 18. 12. Luke 18. 2.

In the next place follows the Virtues enjoyned.

The first is *Confidence, or Faith in God*, which is directly opposed to trust in Riches, so as rich men may have wherein to trust, though they trust not in Riches. God is the God of the Rich, as well as of the Poor, and the one as well as the other, are to put their whole trust in him.

And if we consider the property here given to God, *viz. Living, but trust in the living God*; we shall see good reason to trust in God, rather than in Riches. For our wealth may vanish away, but he ever liveth; our wealth may prove our bane, but he is both the giver and preserver of life. Our trusting in God is here pressed by an Argument taken from Gods bounty to us in these words, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*: So that the Lord is not only a *Living* but also a *Giving* God, of whose gift you have not only your life, but also your riches; yea, all that you have is the gift of God, who giveth you not only all needful things, but also *Richly*, and as St. James saith, *liberally*. For God in his gifts sheweth himself to be a God, and that two ways. 1. In the freeness. 2. In the

James 1. 5.

Plat. 68. 19.

greatness of them, *He loadeth us with benefits*, saith the Psalmist. This Rich bounty of God is a further motive to draw you to trust in him.

Yea, the Apostle addeth, that the Lord giveth us all things richly to enjoy; that is, not only for the present to spend, as being absolutely necessary; but also to lay up and reserve, so as it is not unlawful to lay up for after-times. The Apostle presseth it on Parents as a bounden Duty,

2. Cor. 12. 14.

to lay up for their Children.

Only let this lawful liberty be limited with these and such like bounds.

1. That we lay up nothing but what is justly gotten. To lay up Riches of unrighteousness, is to kindle a fire that may destroy both our temporal and our spiritual estate.

2. That we be not so covetous of hoarding up, as to deny our selves what is needful for our use and comfort, or to deny the poor what is needful and necessary for them; but that we willingly give out, as what is meet for our selves, so what is necessary to the poor.

3. That in our treasuring up, we aim not meerly, wholly, and only at our selves, but withal have an eye, as to the charge which in particular God hath committed to us, so also to the Church, Commonwealth, and Poor for the time to come.

4. That we exceed not measure in our treasure, no though we aim at the fore-mentioned good ends.

So much for the clearing the first Duty the Apostle would have pressed upon Rich men especially, which is to *Trust in God*.

The.

The second is *Charity towards men*, expressed in several phrases, as first by doing good.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good. So that true Charity consisteth not only in compassionate affections, and kind speeches, but in good deeds, as the word in the Original implieth.

You Rich men ought to be rich in good works, as the Apostle addeth. For God expecteth fruit answerable to the seed which he soweth. He giveth you plenty of seed, therefore you must be plentiful in this kind of fruit.

The next branches, *Ready to distribute, willing to communicate*, set forth the manner of our charity.

The former implying a *wise distribution of our Alms*; for to distribute is not hand over head, without consideration to give, but according to the need of them to whom we give. The latter implying a willingness therein. As by distributing, good is done to others; so by willingness therein, much comfort is brought unto our own souls, and grace to the work; and God doth best accept such, for *he loveth a cheerful willing* 2 Cor. 9. 7. giver.

In the next place follows the Reasons, to enforce the fore-named Duties taken from the benefit of performing them, which is in brief, assurance of eternal life, implied in these words, *Laying up in store for themselves, a good foundation, against the time to come, that they may lay bold on eternal life.* The Apostle here, for their better encouragement to lay out a portion of their estate on good works, telleth them that they are so far from losing what they so lay out, as in truth they lay up thereby in store for themselves.

Yea they lay up a good foundation, that is, such a treasure as is like a foundation in the ground, that cannot be shaken nor overthrown. This treasure the Apostle thus expresseth, in opposition to the fore-mentioned uncertainty of Riches. So as by a cheerful distribution of this worlds wealth, they do indeed but exchange uncertainties, for certainties, and so no fear of losing by such bargains. *Yea, they thereby obtain eternal life.*

Quest. *Are then good works the cause of eternal life?*

Ans. Surely, No; only they are the means and way of attaining thereto, and in this sense, is this phrase here used; *That they may lay bold on eternal life*: Having thus shewed you the occasion of the words; the logical Resolution of them, their sense and meaning,

I should now according to my accustomed method, come to such points of Doctrine, which the words do naturally afford unto us; But I

must wave them, and fall upon that *Question*, or *case of conscience*, which was given me to handle, viz.

Quest. How, or after what manner, must we give Alms, that they may be acceptable, and pleasing unto God? In the resolving whereof, I shall endeavour to answer most of the cases of conscience about Alms-giving.

Ans. 1. It must be *with justice*, giving only of our own, whereunto we have a just right and title, so much our Saviour implieth in that precept of his, where he saith, Give alms of such things as you have, whereby is not meant, such things as a man hath by him (for one may have another mans things by him) but such things are his own, whereunto he hath a just title, and undoubted right whereof he is the lawful proprietor, hath the power of disposing those things, and those only he may lawfully and justly give away.

This Caveat is very necessary for many Reasons,

1. Because otherwise we shall sever mercy from justice, which should always go hand in hand. God hath put them together; *Prov.* 21. 21. *Dan.* 4. 27. and we must not put them asunder; indeed they are two links of one and the same chain, of which other virtues and graces are also other links; So many virtues, so many links; Now if one link of a chain fall off, the whole chain is broken, and down falls that which is drawn or held up by it: so we that are held up out of the pit of destruction by the chains of graces, are in danger to fall into it, if one grace be violated, and severed from the rest.

2. By giving that which is not our own, the excellency and glory of Charity is lost, of such Charity it may be said, *Isabod*, where is the glory? The glory of Charity consists in this, that we are willing to part with our own, and therein to damnify our selves, for the relief and succour of others.

3. By giving that which is not our own, we do wrong, and thereby make our selves liable to restitution; so as charity in such a case, is a plain injury. It is a case wherein recompence of Revenge may more be feared, than recompence of Reward expected.

Quest. Who may be said to give that which is not their own?

Ans. They who filch, steal, or rob for this very end: As Parents for Children, or Children for Parents, or one friend for another. It is a sin for one to steal to satisfy his own hunger, much more is it sin to steal for another; certainly it is a great wickedness to do injustice, that we may do acts of Charity,

2. Such as having raised up an estate, or got something by indirect and unjust means, as by lying, swearing, false weights, deceitful measures, and the like:

like; think to make up all by giving part to the Poor. For as the Civilians say *Bonus usus non justificat injusit quæsit.* well, The good use doth not justify the unjust getting of their goods. And can any imagine that God will be pleased with those mens charity, who give relief out of that which they have wrongfully gotten? restitution should rather be made to such as have been wronged. And if neither the parties wronged, nor their heirs can be found, then what hath been wrongfully got, ought to be given to the Poor, as their heirs. An example whereof we have in *Zacchæus*, who having wronged many by oppression, after his conversion, offereth four-fold restitution unto all whom he had wronged, and because many could not be found, to whom he should make it, he offereth to bestow half of his goods to the relief of the poor;

Luk. 19.8

3. Such as being under authority, and having no propriety in the things which they give, do notwithstanding give directly against, or simply without the consent of those who have the true propriety, do not give of their own, Servants, Children, and others. Indeed Servants, and Children, may lawfully give out of that which is their own, but not out of that which is their Masters, or Parents, without their allowance.

4. Such as being joyed in Partnership with another, and give Alms out of the Common stock without the consent of their Partners, do not give that which is their own.

5. Such as are in extream debt, and owe more than they are worth; We shewed that mercy and justice must go together, yea, justice must go before mercy, and be satisfied before mercy be shewed. They who owe more than they are worth, have nothing at all to give for Alms, such joyn Arrogancy to Injustice, to make shew of a great estate; and yet have none.

I shall close this with a word of advice to such as have a merciful and charitable disposition, above their outward condition and ability; That they use the best diligence they can, by all lawful and warrantable means, to get something to bestow upon charitable uses. Let poor labouring men take so much the more pains, that they may have somewhat to give; let servants spare out of their wages; let such as have no propriety in any thing, but are wholly maintained by them under whom they live, as Children, Apprentices, and others, do what they can to obtain something of their Parents, or other Governours, even for this very end, that they may have something to give. Let such as are in debt, first pay their Debts, and then give Alms. Let such as have any way defrauded others, first make restitution, and then relieve them that are in need. Finally, let such as live at the extent of their estate, and much more, such as live beyond their means, well weigh wherein they may cut off some of their expences to bestow on the Poor.

II. Alms.

11. Alms-giving must be with freedom, and cheerfulness, and not grudgingly; The phrase of giving Alms, frequently mentioned in Scripture implyeth as much, for to give, is freely to bestow. In the Law this propriety of giving, is plainly expressed, and by the contrary thus explained, *Thou shalt freely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him.* It is also implied under this phrase, *thou shalt open thy hand wide.* Alms must not be wrestled and wrung out of a mans hand, but he must of himself open his hand; that is, freely give. The word wide addeth emphasis. And in the Gospel we find it commanded by the Apostle, *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

Many motives may be produced to induce us hereunto: as,

1. The pattern of God our Heavenly Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

All the good that the Father doth, he doth most freely; Who hath first given unto him? The word which is used to set out that which God giveth, signifieth a free gift; and he is said to love us freely, *Hos. 14. 4.* To justify us freely, *Rom. 3. 24.* and freely to give us all things, *Rom. 8. 32.*

This Reason of Gods love, The Lord set his love upon you, because he loved you, doth clearly demonstrate the freeness of it.

The good also which the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Saviour doth for us, he doth most freely upon his own love, without any desert of ours: in this respect it is said that he hath loved us, and hath given himself for us. The conjunction of these two, love, and giving, plainly prove the freeness of the gift. But further he expressly saith concerning the freeness of his gift, *I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely.*

2. A second Motive may be taken from the nature of Charity which unless it be free, is not true and sound. Thus much the Apostle implyeth under this phrase, *Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* By Charity he meaneth a free giving of that which is given, meerly out of love and pity to him, unto whom he giveth.

3. Free giving makes that which is given to man acceptable to God; for God loveth a cheerful giver. Yea, God hath more respect to this manner of giving, than to the greatness of the gift. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

4. A free manner of giving, makes the gift the more acceptable to him that is made partaker thereof. As the gift supplieth his want, so the manner of giving reviveth his spirit. The Apostle rejoiceth in the Lord greatly, upon

upon that care which the *Philippians* shewed to him in his necessity. *Phil. 4. 10.*

5. *A free and chearful giving much redoundeth to the glory of God*, in that others are stirred up to praise God for such gifts. *David* praised Gods glorious name, when he saw his people offer willingly unto the Lord. *1 Chron. 28. 13, 14.* And this in respect the Apostle saith of such benevolence, that it is abundant by many thanksgivings unto God. *2 Cor. 9. 2. & 12.*

III. *With simplicity and sincerity*; according to that of the Apostle, *He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity*; that is, with an honest, plain, and sincere heart, not aiming therein at his own praise, or applause, but at the glory of God, doing it in obedience to his command. This simplicity in giving, our Saviour hinterh unto us, where he saith, *When thou dost Alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth*: that is, let not the nearest that may be unto thee know what thou givest. The right hand is that hand wherewith we ordinarily give, yet the left hand is often assistant to it. Now though there should be any so near unto thee, as to be helpful and assistant, or at hand, yet let them not know it; make known thy charity to none. *Rom. 12. 8. Mat. 6. 3.*

Quest. *May we not give Alms if others be by?*

Ans. *Yea, if need so require*; as at publick Collections, or when in publick we see one stand in need. But we may not do it with a mind to have it known, our mind must be free from all such conceit, and we must so do it, as if we were alone. *That Alms is not unacceptable which is given and seen of men, but that which is given to be seen of men.* So that the scope of our Saviour in the fore-mentioned place, is to take us off from all vain glory, in giving of our Alms, that as much as in us lieth we should endeavour to hide and conceal our good works from the eye of the world. *Non est ingratum elemosyna qua fit & videtur, sed qua fit ut non videatur.*

IV. *Our Alms must be given with a compassionate heart, with bowels of affection*. The Greek word for *Alms* is derived from a word that signifies *Mercy*, which intimateth the disposition of the giver, how he should be a merciful man, whose bowels are moved at the misery of another, and thereupon contributes to his need with bowels of compassion. *ἐλεησέων ab illa & misericordia.*

In giving we must not onely open our hands, but our hearts also in pity and compassion; We must draw out our own souls (as the Prophet speaketh) as well as our purses, to the hungry and afflicted; which is implied under several expressions of Charity, used in Scripture by the Holy

Prov. 14. 21. ly Ghost, as He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he. And again, He that
 Chap. 19. 17. hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord. And saith the Apostle Saint
 Col. 3. 12. Paul, Put on, as the Elect of God, bowels of mercy. And saith the beloved
 Disciple St. John, Who so hath this worlds goods, and seeth his Brother hath
 need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love
 of God in him? It is not sufficient to have an open, liberal hand, unless
 we have also an open and compassionate heart; for if the Sacrifice of
 our Alms-deeds be not mingled with the oyl and incense of mercy and
 compassion, it will not be acceptable unto God, who will have Mercy as
 well as Sacrifice. In contributing therefore to the relief of the poor;
 let our inward affection, go along with our outward-action.

*Beneficentia
 ex benivolentia
 naminare debet.
 Affectus
 tuum nomen
 imponit operi
 tuo. Amb.
 Offic. 30.*

As helps hereunto,

Mat. 5 7.

1st Be well-informed in the benefit that compassion bringeth, and that not
 only to thy distressed Brother, who is succoured, but also to thy self, to
 whom in this case a promise of mercy is made; Blessed are the merciful,
 for they shall obtain mercy: Mercy from other men, and mercy from God
 himself.

Ecl. 9. 2.

*Propter possibi-
 litatem similia
 patiend. Tho.
 2a, 2a. quest.
 3. art. 2.
 Heb. 13. 3.
 Ut qui sitis &
 ipsi isdem ca-
 lanitatibus
 obnoxii. Beza
 in loc.
 Theo. Ep. 29.*

2. Well weigh the common condition of all, how All things come alike to all;
 as the Wise-man speaketh, so as thou also art subject to the same distress
 whereunto others are brought; and therefore as Aquinas saith, we should
 have compassion on other mens misery, for the possibility of suffering the
 like; Which argument the Apostle useth to the Hebrews, saying, Remem-
 ber them which suffer adversity, as being your selves also in the body; that is,
 say some, as being members of the same body, but rather, as Beza and
 others interpret the place, as being your selves in the body of flesh and frail-
 ty, subject to the like miseries; for so long as we dwell here in these houses
 of Clay, and carry about us this earthly Tabernacle, we are all subject to
 the like changes and chances; which made old learned Theodoret, to reach
 his helping-hand to those out-cast Africans, For when I saw (quoth he)
 their pitiful estate, I began to lay to heart the doubtful turnings and inversions
 of humane things, and to fear lest I my self might fall into the like evils.

Ecl. 3. 1. 11.

*Gal. 6. 10.
 nunc est.*

V. Our Alms must be given seasonably; for as the Wise-man speak-
 eth, To every thing there is a season, and every thing is beautiful only in its
 time and season; And therefore it will be our wisdom so to observe the
 needs and necessities of other men, that we do not let slip any season,
 or opportunity of doing good. According to the exhortation of the A-
 pple, As we have opportunity, let us do good. The word in the Original tran-
 slated opportunity, properly signifies a seasonable time.

Quest. Which are the most seasonable times of doing works of mercy?

Ans. 1. When accidentally thou meetest with any fit objects of
 mercy,

mercy, thou must not then pass them by with the Priest and Levite; but Luk. 10. 31, 32 with the good Samaritan, presently pour the Oyl and Wine of thy charity into the wounds of thy Brother, forthwith contributing somewhat to his relief; For misery being the proper object of mercy, thou shouldst then extend thy mercy unto such as are in want and misery.

2. When God by his providence hath any way blessed and encreased thy stock and store, by prospering thy adventure at Sea, or thy trading at home, or by some great Legacy bequeathed thee by some of thy friends, that is a seasonable time for thee to give out freely and liberally to the relief of the poor, in testimony of thy thankfulness unto God for his bounty towards thee. I know it is usual with most men upon the encrease of their stock and store, to sacrifice to their own nets, to ascribe their wealth to their own wit and policy, and to say in their hearts, *Their power, and the might of their hand hath gotten them this wealth.* But mark what Moses saith in the next verse, 18. *Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.* Seeing therefore what thou hast, thou hast received from God, whatsoever the means and instruments were of conveying it unto thee, is it not most just and equal, that in way of thankfulness thou shouldst set apart some portion thereof for the poor & needy?

3. The Lords Day is another seasonable time of doing works of mercy, according to the Apostles Rule and Direction; Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2 Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him. Where by the first day of the week is meant, the Lords Day, on which the Apostle enjoyneth the Corinthians to lay up something in store; implying thereby, that that is a very fit season, not only to do such works of mercy, which are then offered unto us, but also to prepare for other times.

4. Days of Thanksgiving for some eminent mercy, are another seasonable time of doing works of Mercy. The remembering of the poor at such times is expressly commanded in Scripture; *Thou shalt rejoice in thine heart, thou, and thy Son, and thy Daughter, and thy Man-servant, and thy Maidservant, and the Levites, the Stranger, and the Fatherless, and the Widow:* Here the Stranger, the Fatherless, the Widow, are commanded to rejoice on their days of Feasting, which pre-supposeth the Rich mens sending portions of their good cheer unto them, which was the practice of the people of God, as appeareth by that command of Nehemiah to the Jews on a day of Thanksgiving; *Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared.* And their day of thanksgiving from Haman's conspiracy, is called a day of feasting, Neh. 8. 10. Esth. 9. 22.

fasting, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor. And what more seasonable time can there be for shewing mercy to the poor, than when we are blessing God for his manifold mercies vouchsafed unto us?

5. Days of Fasting and Prayer, are another seasonable time of doing works of mercy. For how can we expect that God should shew mercy unto us in removing those judgments which we feel, or in preventing those which we fear; if we will not shew mercy to our poor Brethren, who stand in need of our relief? In the day of our fasting therefore, let us at least give away to the poor, so much as we save by our Fast. For as

** Tum grata sunt. Dio no- stra ieiunia, si illi qui necessitate ieiunant reficiantur a nobis. Aug. Sermon. de Temp. 64. Prov. 3. 27. * Qui sic moratur, neganti proximus est. Senec. de benefic. l. 2. c. 5. Beneficia non sunt procrastinanda, sed tempestive danda, ut maxime prodesse possint. Bis dat, qui cito dat. Ingratum est beneficium quod diu inter manus dantis haesit. Senec. de Benef.*

St. Austin in one of his Sermons saith, ** Then are our fasts acceptable to God, if they which fast out of necessity, because they want meat, be relieved by us.* Let this therefore be always observed by us, that the poor have the gain of our fasting, and not our own purses.

VI. Our Alms must be given readily and speedily, without any needless delay; according to the counsel of the Wiseman, *With-hold not good from them to whom it is due*; that is, with-hold not any act of Charity from those who stand in need of thy help, ** Say not unto thy Neighbour, go and come again, and so tomorrow I will give thee, when thou hast it by thee*; he that so delayeth his helping hand, is next door to him that denieth. And therefore as any occasion offers it self unto us, let us speedily embrace the same, as knowing that a speedy giver, is a double benefactor, and the swifter that a benefit cometh, the sweeter it tasteth. And contrariwise a ben fit loseth its grace that ticketh to his fingers who is about to bestow it. What then shall we think of their charity, who put off all to their death-beds, never giving any thing considerable to the Poor, till they can keep it no longer? these though by their *last will* and testament they give somewhat to the poor, yet questionless it is *against* their wills; for could they have kept it longer, they would not have parted with it.

I shall desire such seriously to consider, these six things;

1. That if all Rich men should do thus, the poor would soon be starved for want of bread.
2. That this practise of theirs, is against the express command of God, who requireth us to do good, and communicate out of our store, while we have time and opportunity.
3. That they have no assurance of the continuance of their wealth. For as the wiseman speaketh, *Riches many times make themselves wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven*; they have *Eagles wings* to flye from us. And how many are there, who have out-lived a fair estate? If God in his displeasure, blasts a mans substance; it vanisheth away in a moment.

4. Though

4. Though their Riches should continue with them, even to their deaths? yet they have no assurance that God will give them grace to be liberal at their deaths, who had never the goodness to be charitable in their life-time.

5. That they have no assurance that God will accept of their Death-bed charity: what St. *Austin* speaketh of Death-bed Repentance, that it is seldom true and hearty; The same may I say of Death-bed Charity, it is seldom true and hearty, but for the most part rotten and hypocritical, proceeding from ill grounds, as vain-glory, conceit of merit, and the like.

6. That they have no assurance of the true performance of their will, that the poor shall be the better for what is thereby given them. For how many *Executors* have proved most unfaithful to their trusts, whereby many charitable gifts have been clean perverted. And if friends be so unfaithful, to us in our life-time; how can we but question their fidelity after our deaths? Oh therefore that all, whom the Lord hath blessed with an estate, would in their life time become their own *Administrators*, making (as one saith,) their own hands their *Executors*, and their own eyes their *Overseers*. For questionless that charity which is exercised in a mans life-time is the best, and most acceptable unto God.

VII. Our Alms must be bountiful and liberal, giving out proportionably to what the Lord hath given unto us. This is implied in that command of God to his people, *Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy Brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the Land*; that is, thou shalt give unto him bountifully and liberally. And our Apostle here in the Text, would have rich men charged to be rich in good works, even as God hath given them all things richly to enjoy; For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required. And therefore the same Apostle adviseth the *Corinthians* to give, as God hath prospered them: To whom God hath given little of this worlds goods, of them he requireth but little, but to whom he hath given much, of them he requireth much. Rich men therefore must not only give a portion of their wealth to the relief of others, but also in some fit proportion to their estate.

Quest. If any shall ask, What is that portion or proportion of estate, which rich men ought to set apart for Charitable uses?

Ans. It is an hard matter to determine the quantity and proportion of mens charity, the Scripture being silent herein, leaving this to the discretion and ingenuity of the prudent Christian. As the Apostle speaketh, Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, &c. If a Cor. 9. 7. certain quantity is not set him, that is left to the free purpose of his own heart.

But yet though the Scripture giveth us no direct precept in this particular; it holdeth forth many *presidents* for our imitation; as that of Jacob, who in testimony of his thankfulness unto God for what he should bestow upon him, Vowed the tenth part thereof unto God for pious and charitable uses. And Jacob vowed a vow unto God, saying, *Of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee.* Of Cornelius it is recorded, that he gave much Alms. And the Macedonians are highly commended for their great bounty, and large contributions. These examples are left upon record for our imitation. For as the Apostle speaketh, *whatsoever things were written afore-time, were written for our learning, and for our admonition.* So that though the quantity of our Alms, how much we should give, is not expressly set down; yet this we find both commanded and commended, by precepts and presidents, in the Scripture, that we give liberally and bountifully: in some fit proportion to our estates; that if we be rich in this worlds goods, we should then be rich in good works; sowing liberally, that so we may reap liberally.

Now that our Alms may be liberal, it must be fitted to two things, viz.

1. The Necessity of the Receiver.
2. The Ability of the Giver.

That in giving we should have respect to the need and necessity of our Brother; The Law is clear, which saith, *If there be among you a poor man of one of thy Brethren, thou shalt open thy hand wide unto him, and shalt give him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.* That we should likewise have respect to our own Ability, the Apostle St. Peter is as clear, where he saith, *If any man minister, let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth;* that is, let every one give with respect to his own estate and ability. Notwithstanding in cases of urgent necessity, and great extremity, we are to strain our selves even above our ability.

Here it may not be impertinent to answer another question (for I resolve to contrive all I have to deliver upon this subject into this plain and easie method) and that is this.

Quest. *How many ways may rich men exercise their charity?*

Ans. 1. By laying out a portion of their estate in such a way as directly tends to the worship of God, the advancement of Religion, the salvation of mens souls; which I may not unfitly term, *A Spiritual Charity.*

And this may also be done several ways. As

1. By contributing towards the planting and propagating the Gospel where it hath not been. A work set on foot by divers in New England, but chiefly carried on by the charity of well-disposed people here in Old England.
2. By setting up, and maintaining of Lectures; the preaching of the Word

Word being the ordinary means appointed by God for the bringing of sinners to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.

Rom. 1. 16.

3. By adding to the maintenance of such settled Preachers, whose pains are great, and means small, through the covetousness of Impropiators, who ingross to themselves what doth more properly belong to the Minister.

4. By maintaining of poor Scholars at the University in reference to the work of the Ministry, that so there may be a continual supply of learned, godly, and Orthodox Ministers, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.

5. By bestowing of Bibles on poor Children, whereby through the care of their Parents, they may be acquainted with the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto salvation. Memorable is the famous gift of Sir John Fenner, who by his last Will gave six pounds per annum to several out-Parishes in London, for the buying of Bibles, to be distributed among poor Children. From my own experience I can say, that this gift hath occasioned many poor people to teach their children to read, that so they might be capable of those Bibles, which are to be given only to such as can in some measure read.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

6. By erecting of Countrey-Schools, and endowing them with some competent maintenance, for teaching of poor mens Children, who have not wherewithal to pay for their schooling, which will be a special means not only to further their civil, but likewise their spiritual education. For thereby they will be made more capable of Divine instruction. Experience teacheth us how ineffectual the most powerful Ministry is upon an ignorant and unlearned Congregation. Questionless therefore the erecting of Countrey-Schools is a work of charity, more noble in it self, more acceptable unto God, and more beneficial to the Kingdom, than the building of Alms-houses, who are too often filled with swarms of idle drones. But though this Spiritual Charity is questionless the more excellent, as tending to a more excellent object, namely, the souls of our neighbors, yet the bodies of our neighbours must be cared for as well as their souls: Our Charity therefore must also extend to them, and in this kind it may be praised and expressed.

Docere simplici-
ter est melius
quam pascere.
Aquin. 2^a, 2^aae.
quest. 32.

II. By a free and liberal giving to the relief of those who are in want, of which I have already largely spoken.

III. By a ready lending to such, as being in a Calling, want stock, or other means to help themselves in their Trades. This Duty of lending we find expressly commanded both in the Law, and in the Gospel; in the Law, as in the place before quoted; Thou shalt open thine hand wide to thy poor Brother and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth, &c. In the Gospel; Lend (saith our Saviour) looking for nothing again; that is, lend.

Dent. 15. 7, 8.

Luke 6. 35.

lend not only to such from whom you may hope, by reason of their ability, to receive your own again; but also to such, as by reason of their poverty may perhaps never be able to repay you. The Psalmist maketh this a note of a righteous and a good man, that he is ever merciful and lendeth; that he sheweth favour and lendeth. Where we see it is set down, as the property of such a man, that he is ready to lend to the poor, to such as stand in need of his help; and that freely, without hope of gain.

Psalm 37. 26.
Psalm 112. 5.

This Duty belongeth especially to Rich men, because the occasions of him that would borrow, usually require more than meaner persons can well spare, they can better give a penny, than lend a pound; though in many cases the lending our Brother a considerable sum together, would be more beneficial to him, than it may be to give him half as much; there is therefore a noble and very generous act of Charity to be exercised this way, & it is peculiar to rich men, who have it by them wherewithal to do it.

IV. Rich men may and ought to express their Charity, by forgiving a debt, in case the borrower be not able to repay it.

There be many who by the help of that which is lent them, God blessing their pains in the employments thereof, are able to repay what is lent. If there were not hope thereof, men would rather give than lend to such.

Luk. 6. 35.

But there are others, who notwithstanding their care and pains in their Calling, thrive not; or by some accident suffer such loss and damage, as they are not able to repay what they have borrowed. In such cases Creditors are bound to forgive (at least to forbear) their debtors. This is the intendment of that charge, *Lend, hoping for nothing again*. To take this phrase simply, is to alter the nature of lending, and to turn it into giving. Herein lyeth the difference betwixt Lending, and Giving: Lending is on condition to have again that which is lent, or at least the worth of it some other way: Giving is free, without any such condition. That advice of Christ, to *lend hoping for nothing again*, hath respect to the mind of the Lender, that he should not have his mind wholly and only upon the repaying of what he lendeth; but on the need of his brother. He is not simply to lend, because he is persuaded he shall lose nothing, but have his own again. He is to lend, because he doth therein great kindness to his Brother, who stands in much need thereof,

ἀπιστία ὁρῶντες
ἀπιστία ὁρῶντες
ἀπιστία ὁρῶντες
desperare

The Greek word properly signifieth to *despair*, and so it may here be taken; as if he had said, when your Brother hath need to borrow, lend, though his case be such that you even despair of receiving it again, though you run some hazzard of losing the principal.

* If therefore it so fall out, that the debtor be not able to repay what he borrowed, forgive it him. He lends hoping for nothing again, who

is willing to forgive in case the necessity of the borrower require it. This was it which *Nehemiah* enjoyned the rich Jews. Excellently doth *Nehem. 5. 11.* our Lord press this Duty in the parable of the two Creditors, where we have a commendable pattern of a certain King, that in such a case forgave a great debt; and of the fore revenge he executed on one of his servants, because he did not in like manner forgive his fellow servant. Mat. 18. 23.

In the Old-Testament it is commended to us under the phrase of restoring the pledge. A pledge was a pawn left by a debtor with his creditor, for assurance to repay the debt. Restoring the pledge when the debt was not paid, was an evidence of remitting the debt. Ezek. 18. 7.
& 33. 1. 5.
Gen. 38. 17. 18

V. By *Hospitality*, which consisteth not so much in a loving entertainment of kindred, friends, and neighbours, as of strangers; as the word in the Greek importeth.

φιλοξενία
compounded
of *φιλέω* & *ξένος*

φιλοξενία est species liberalitatis qua peregrinos & hospites ac. praesertim propter vera Doctrina professorem ex-
sulantem, vera benevolentia, & aliquibus officiis hospitalitatis prosequimur, *Ursin. Cat. φιλοξενία ἔστι*
φιλοξενία & *χρηστία* *ἐστίν.* *Clemens, Alexand.*

This is that hospitality; which is both commanded and commended to us in the holy Scripture. It is commanded in those known Precepts of the Apostle *St. Paul, Rom. 12. 13. Be given to Hospitality, and be not forgetful to entertain strangers, Heb. 13. 2.* Which is as much as to say, Forget not Hospitality, which is an entertaining of strangers. And the Apostle *St. Peter* commands the faithful to whom he writes, to use hospitality 1 Pet. 4. 9. without grudging or repining.

It is commended to us in the practice of Gods people; as of *Abraham, Gen 18. 1, 3,* of whom it is recorded, that he sat at his Tent-door looking and waiting as it were for strangers to entertain them; and so soon as he saw three men, whom he took for such, he ran to invite them. And of *Lot*, that as he sat in the gate of *Sodom*, he saw two whom he conceived to be strangers, them he exceedingly pressed to turn into his house, where he made them a feast. And of the *Shunamite* woman, and her husband, who shewed themselves hospitable to the Prophet *Elisha*, as oft as he passed by their house, 2 King. 4. 8.
Job 31. 32. We have *Jobs* testimony of himself, The stranger, said he, did not lodge in the streets, but I opened my door to the traveller: Which words set out *Jobs* great hospitality, who kept open house for all Passengers. In those days there was no common Inn for the entertainment of strangers; and therefore they must have lyen out of doors, if some good men had not entertained them.

Having such and so many preidents of hospitality, let us strive to follow them, labouring to write after their Copy, knowing assuredly that

OUR

our labour of love and cost therein shall not be in vain. For I may truly say, it is a fruitful, and gainful course of liberality, never did any lose by it. *Some hereby have entertained Angels,* as the Apostle speaketh; *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained Angels unaware.* In setting down this recompence the Apostle hath an especial respect unto two instances, one of *Abraham*, the other of *Lot*.

Gen. 18. 2. Angels came to both these, in the appearance of men, whom they knew not, which sheweth Gods high account of this Duty, in that once and again he sent Angels, to such as were ready to entertain strangers.

Yea, we may entertain Christ himself, and indeed in every entertainment of a poor godly stranger, Christ himself is entertained. And therefore in the great day of Judgment, we read that Christ puts in this good work by name; *I was a stranger and ye took me in;* Jesus Christ is a stranger in his members.

In sacred Scriptures we find several others rewarded for their Hospitality; as,

Gen. 24. 22. *Ribeckah* for her courtesie to *Abrahams* servant, a meer stranger to her, was rewarded with precious gifts and a good Husband. The *Sbunamites* Hospitality to the Prophet, was recompenced with giving her a Son, and restoring him to life. *The Widow of Sareptahs* hospitality to the Prophet *Elijah*, in receiving him into her house in a great famine, was rewarded with preserving and increasing her Meal and Oyl, for it is expressly said, *that her barrel of meal wasted not, neither did her cruse of Oyl fail, until the Lord sent plenty of food.*

Rom. 16. 23. *Gaius* his hospitality towards *St. Paul* in receiving him into his house, was recompenced with an honourable Testimony, which both *St. Paul* and *St. John* gave of him.

1 Joh. 5. 6. *Object.* Some may object and say, Instead of a Godly man I may happily entertain some dissembling Hypocrite, and so lose both my gift and reward?

Ans. 1. Our Charity ought to hope the best of every one, of whom we have no evident proof, or presumption, to the contrary.

2. If we receive a distressed Minister, in the Name of a Minister of Christ, or Private distressed Christian, in the name of a Righteous man, supposing him to belong to Christ; let him be what he will, we shall neither lose gift, nor reward, Christ hath undertaken the payment thereof.

V. Rich men may and ought in some cases to express their Charity, even by selling what they have, for the relief of others, according

according to that of our Saviour, *Sell what ye have and give Alms.* Luke 12. 35.

Quest. In what cases must rich men sell their estates, or any part of them for the relief of others?

Ans. 1. When they are extraordinarily called thereunto, as he that asked Christ, what he should do to inherit eternal life? Christ said unto him, *Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor.* That which the Apostles did in leaving their Callings to follow Christ, was equivalent to selling their possessions.

Mat. 19. 17, 21.

Mat. 19. 27.

2. When they have defrauded and oppressed others, and are rebuked for that sin, or otherwise brought to repentance for the same, they ought to testify the truth of their repentance, by a full restitution, though it be by parting with their possession. Thus did the Jews after their Captivity restore to their poor Brethren, whom they had oppressed with Usury, their lands and their houses, &c. The instance of *Zacharias* tendeth also to this purpose, who promiseth to give the half of his goods to the poor.

Neh. 5. 11, 12.

Luke 19. 8.

3. When there are such a multitude of indigent persons in the Church, as the superfluity of such as are rich is not sufficient to relieve them. In this case, Christians in the primitive Church that were possessors of lands, or houses, sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Acts 4. 34, 35.

These particular cases, being all of them somewhat extraordinary, do not patronize the Platonical and familistical conceit of Community of Goods.

Which fond mistake of theirs, these arguments amongst others, may sufficiently confute, and evince propriety in lands and possessions to be lawful now in the times of the Gospel.

1. In those very times wherein Christians for use, had all things common, *St. Peter* expressly saith to *Ananias* concerning the Lands which he sold, whilst it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Hereby it is manifest, that men then had a propriety in Goods and Lands.

Acts 5. 4.

2. The duties prescribed to rich men in the words of my Text, to do good, to be ready to distribute, and willing to communicate, prove as much.

3. The many admonitions to pay Debts, to give tribute, and perform other like Duties of Justice, do imply a propriety of Goods.

4. Exhortations also to Lend, and to Sell, prove as much. For men may not lend, nor sell that wherein they have not a propriety.

Luke 6. 35.

Chap. 11. 41.

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5. Inhibitions

Eph. 4. 28.
1 Thel. 4. 6.

5. Inhibitions against stealing, and against all kind of injustice, suppose a propriety.

Thus have I done with the seventh property, requisite to the right manner of giving Alms, which is bounty and liberality, whercon I have somewhat the longer insisted, because it is the principal thing intended in my Text, *That they which are rich in this world's goods, be rich in good works.* I shall add but one more.

Psal. 112. 5.
Turpissimum
genus perdendi
est inconfusa
donatio.

VIII. Our Alms must be given prudently, with discretion, according to every ones need. It is said of the merciful man, *A good man sheweth favour and lendeth he will guide his affairs with discretion.* And truly there is a great deal of discretion to be used, in the ordering of our Charity, by putting a difference between a poor and poor; for as one saith, *undivided giving, is the worst kind of losing.*

1 Cor. 13. 3.
Χοῖρ.

Prudence in Alms-giving is commended to us by our Saviour, in this word, *distribute, distribute to the poor,* Luke 18. 22. For to distribute, is with discretion to give to sundry persons, several portions, according to their need. When mention is made of a prudent, discreet, relieving the poor, it is thus expressed; *Distribution was made unto every man according to his need.*

A. 4. 35.

For the better performing this due discretion in our Charity, let these rules following be observed:

1 Tim. 5. 8.

1. First, they are before others to be relieved, *over whom we have an especial charge,* as they who are of our household, of our own house and family, as Wife, Children, and Servants? For as the Apostle speaketh, *If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an Infidel.*

ἡ ἀνάσχεσις.

2 Tim. 5. 16.

2. In our Charity we ought to have a special respect unto our poor kindred, for of those is the fore-mentioned place (1 Tim. 5. 8.) to be understood, where the word in the Greek, translated House, is rendred *Kindred* in the Margin of your Bibles. For the scope of the Apostle is to free the Church from unnecessary charges, and to that end doth impose the care of providing for poor kindred, upon such of their Relations as were able.

D. ut. 15. 7, 8.

3. They are to be relieved, who are of the Congregation, or Parish, whereof we are members, especially they who dwell near unto us, in regard that we may best know their wants.

Gal. 6. 10.

4. They whom we have just cause to believe, [that they are] of the household of faith. For we may judge them to be true in their words; and believe their wants are such as they declare them to be. Now

amongst

amongst the godly, such are especially to be relieved, and to be preferred in our charity, who are imprisoned; or otherwise suffer for Christ, and the Gospel sake: For Christ in a special manner is relieved in the persons of such, as himself will acknowledge at the Day of Judgment, when he will pronounce that blessed sentence of absolution to such merciful men: *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you: For I was an hungred and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink, I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I was in prison, and ye came unto me, &c.*

Mat. 25. 34.

5. They whom we discern to stand in need of present succour; though they be meer strangers, whom we never saw or knew before. Hereof we have a worthy pattern set before us in the good Samaritan.

Luk. 10. 33. &c.

6. They who are in Prison, or sick, or any other ways restrained from making their wants known unto others.

Mat. 25. 36.

7. They of whose piety, poverty, and necessity, credible testimony is brought unto us though we see them not our selves. Thus many of the Christian Gentiles, sent relief to the Churches at Jerusalem upon the Apostles making known their wants.

Rom. 15. 25. 26.

Acts 14. 17.

In these and other like cases we ought to extend our Charity according to the necessity of those whom we relieve, and our own ability. And not think it enough to give a few scraps of bread and meat, or some half-pennies or pence, to common beggars at our doors, or in the streets. This kind of Almes favoureth more of vain outward ostentation, than of true inward Compassion: And it more becometh proud Pharisees, than humble Christians. A charitable Christian ordinarily giveth more to one whose distressed case he knows, or is credibly made known unto him, than these Pharisees do to many beggars at many times.

Quest. But you'l say, do ye then utterly condemn all giving to common beggars, as unlawful?

Ans. For answer to this Question, we must distinguish of common beggars: some are strong and lusty, able to work, and yet are so lazy, that they will not work, but would live by the sweat of other mens brows. Others again are weak and impotent, unable to work through age, sickness, lameness, blindness, or the like.

These latter are fit objects of charity, and therefore ought to be relieved. But the former sort of Beggars, namely, the strong and lusty, who are able to work, but will not through laziness, are no fit objects of charity, and therefore it is no work of charity to relieve such; For

1. Their trade of life is no wantable calling. It is a disorderly walking, which is expressly taxed by the Apostle; for saith he, *When we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.* For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all. It cannot be said of those, *As the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk*; or, *let every man abide in the same Calling wherein he was called.* God hath called none to such a trade.

2 Thes. 3. 10, 11

1 Cor. 7. 17, 20

Tellurk inutile
pouitio.

2. They are as drones in a hive of Bees; they live of the labours of others, but bring in nothing to the stock, as all the other Bees do. They are as barren Trees, which receive sap from the earth, but yield no fruit; unprofitable burthens of the earth, whose sad doom ye may read; Luke 13. 7.

Deut. 13. 13.

3. Many of them are of no particular Church, nor of any civil society, but out of all Government in Church and State. In this and the former respect they may justly be stiled *Children of Belial*, without yolk.

2 Cor. 12. 17, 18

4. They with-hold, and in a manner rob the state wherein they dwell, of their labour and pains. The State or Kingdom is as a body, all that dwell therein are as so many members; now nature teacheth every member to do somewhat for the benefit of the whole. These doing nothing thereto, sin against the light of Nature.

Qui terguntur
indignis ea qua
dignis confitti
debent, tria
committunt ab-
surda.

1. Nam & ipsi
iustitiam faci-
unt.

2. Et in bonis
contumeliosi
sunt.

3. Et malos ro-
borant materia
vitiarum suppe-
dita.

5. They who are truly poor shall by this means be neglected and scantied, whilst these lazy drones devour that which of right belongeth unto them.

6. They are a great scandal and shame to the Government of the Nation wherein they are. For their course of life implieth that no good provision is made for the poor; nor order taken to set such as are able to work, and to relieve such as are impotent. Now it is a great sin to be a shame to ones own Country.

7. Their kind of life is sensual and brutish; for as brutes they spend all their days in seeking food for their bodies.

From hence it followeth, that they who relieve such, make themselves accessory to the fore-mentioned sins.

There are some allegations made for relieving such; but they are undue allegations, and may easily be answered; The chiefest of them is this.

Luke 6. 30.

1. Christ commandeth to give to every man that asketh thee. *Answer.* To this I answer, that the Precept is to be taken in reference to a false position of the Pharisees, which was this, that their Country-

men

men and friends only were their Neighbours, whom by the Law they were bound to love. That this was their opinion, is evident by this their gloss on the Law; *Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* And by the Parable which Christ produceth to demonstrate to the Lawyer who was his Neighbour. In opposition to that false doctrine, Christ commands to give, not to friends only, but to every man. So as the scope of that precept is, to take away respect of persons in Almsgiving: that we should not restrain this Duty of Charity to Countrymen, kindred, and friends; but extend it also to strangers, enemies, and to every one, that being in need crave it of us.

2. A second Allegation is, *That many beggars may perish if they be not relieved.*

Answer. In case of necessity they may and must be relieved, either at doors, in streets, or other like places, where their necessity is manifested. Necessity (as we speak) hath no Law. It dispences with ordinary Rules. Instance that which Christ produced concerning David. *He entered into the House of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful.*

I have done with the Question allotted to me, give me leave to add a few words, for the more profitable pressing this most necessary, but much neglected Duty of Charity; I shall dispatch my intendment herein.

1. By shewing you by what means you may obtain this Grace.

2. Give you some Motives to quicken you up to a conscionable performance of the works of it.

The means are these,

1. *Meditation:* Seriously meditate,

1. Of the Necessity of it, which ariseth from the Lords express charge and command, unto which we are bound to yield obedience. It is often commanded both in the Old and New Testament. That I

may not be tedious, I shall give you but two or three proofs, *Deut. 15.*

11. A place I often mentioned for the excellency, and exceeding pertinency of it to this purpose. Saith the Lord to his people there; *The*

poor shall never cease out of the Land; Therefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the Land; that is, thou shalt give unto him freely and bountifully.

And saith our Saviour in the New Testament; *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away,* And saith the Apostle, *To do good, and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased;* in which words he presseth the Duty with

with a forcible Motive; for who would not do that which is well-pleasing unto God, who is bountiful in rewarding the least good we do upon his command.

This duty of Alms-given being so expressly commanded in Scripture, it is not in our power to omit or neglect the same; neither can any creature give us a dispensation against the Creators command. A Prophet stileth omission of that which God enjoyneth to be done (yea though that omission were but in part, and that upon a fair pretence) *Rebellion, which is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness, which is as iniquity and idolatry.* Against him who failed in performing the charge enjoyned him (though he were a King) this doom is denounced, *because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being King.* In like manner may God reject such as neglect this Duty of *Charity*; when he calls them to it, from being Kings, and reigning in Heaven. We have a manifest instance thereof, *Mat. 25. 41, 42, 43.*

Verf. 16.

Luk. 17. 10.

Now the giving of Alms being a Duty so expressly commanded in the holy Scriptures, it cannot therefore be accounted a matter merely arbitrary, left to a mans own will, to give or not to give. But it is a bounden duty, which they that in any competent measure can do, must not omit, which consideration cannot but be a strong incitation unto us, to make conscience of this Duty of Alms-giving, as occasion is offered, and not to over-slip opportunities, that by the Divine providence are offered unto us. Should we neglect that which our Lord hath expressly commanded? that whereunto by vertue of that command we are bound? that whereof we are to give an account? Let us upon the Lords commands do what in this kind we can: And when we have done what we can, say, *We are unprofitable servants, we have done what was our duty to do.*

2. Of the Equity of this Duty of Alms-giving. It is a most equal thing, that he who hath wherewithal, should give to him that hath not. The equity ariseth both from the divine providence, and also from the instability of mans state and condition.

1. God for this end gives more to some than to others; that they who have more abundance, should give out of their abundance to them who are in want. This was typically signified by the gathering of *Manna*; which though it were rained down from Heaven, yet the Lord would not allow, that they who had gathered much, even more than was needful for themselves, and their household, should hoard up their superfluity, but enjoyned them to communicate of their abundance, to

such

such as had not enough. The which the Apostle applieth to the giving of Alms out of our abundance to those who want ; which he stileth equal.

2. Mans state is so variable, as he who now hath, may quickly want ; and in want desire to be succoured by such as have. It is thereupon most equal, that they who would be succoured in their need, should be willing to succour the need of others. This equity doth Christ himself press ; *all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.* And as a ground to enforce this the further, he addeth, *for this is the Law and the Prophets.* Hereby implying, that this doctrine is contained in the Law and the Prophets ; but that is not all, these words, *this is the Law and the Prophets,* intend that the sum of the Law and the Prophets consisteth therein ; and the main scope of them tendeth thereunto ; namely so far as they contain the duties of man to man. So evident is the equity hereof even by the light of nature, as the very heathen who wanted the light of Gods word discerned it. Well therefore might the Apostle enforce this duty of charity upon this ground, thus, *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them,* that is ; be helpful to others which cannot help themselves ; as you would have others afford succour unto you, if you were succourless.

3. Meditate of the manifold singular benefits which do follow and accompany a conscionable performance of this duty ; For thereby we discharge our duty to God, who requireth it at our hands, and as a consequent thereof we shall glorifie God ; for it tends much to his praise and glory, when in such works as himself hath commanded, his children testifie their obedience and thankfulness ; and therefore saith our Saviour, *Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bring forth much fruit.*

Joh. 15. 8.

And by our Charity, as we shall grace and adorn our holy profession, so we shall stop the mouths of wicked men from speaking any evil of us or of our profession ; for how are men apt to speak of us, and of our profession, according to the fruits we bring forth, and the good works which we do.

And as we shall thereby comfort, and make glad the hearts of the poor and distressed ; so we shall refresh our own souls, in that our works of Charity will evidence our fruits to be sound and saving, lively and effectual ; for as Rachel said to Jacob, *give me Children or else I die ;* in like manner saith Faith to the soul of a Christian, *Give me Children,* let me bring forth good works, *else I die,* and have no life in me, according to that of the Apostle James, *Faith without works*

Jam. 2. 16.

is dead, its not a living but a dead faith, that manifests not its life by working.

II. As Meditation, so Prayer is a special means on our part to be performed, for attaining unto this grace of Charity. I say, earnest and fervent prayer unto God for the same; for as he is the fountain and author of every good gift, so he hath sanctified Prayer, as the means of obtaining every good gift from him.

Be earnest therefore with God in Prayer, that he would be pleased to give thee a compassionate heart towards the needs and necessities of the poor members of Jesus Christ; so an open hand, that thou mayest freely and liberally contribute unto them, according to their necessity, and thy ability: Beg of God that as he hath blessed thee with some competent estate, so he would add this mercy, to give thee an heart to give out proportionably to what he hath given thee; and that in testimony of thy love, and thankfulness unto him. But alas how few are there who in their prayers unto God are mindful of this grace of Charity? how few are there who ever begged of God, that he would be pleased to implant this noble grace of Charity in their hearts? If upon examination thou findest thy self to have been faulty therein: Go take up a new resolution to be earnest with God in prayer for this grace especially, and never to give over, till thou find it in some measure wrought in thy soul, till thou find thy self upon all good occasions ready to distribute, and willing to communicate to the needs and necessities of thy poor Brethren.

III. Diligence in our Callings, is another means on our part to be performed, for the practising of charity. He that would be charitable to the poor in their needs and necessities; must be diligent and industrious in his calling, so that he may have wherewithall to express his charity; for mens diligence in their callings is usually crowned with a blessing, according to that of the wise man, *the hand of the diligent maketh rich*: And again, *The soul of the diligent shall be made fat*, that is, shall be enriched with outward blessings: and the Greeks say, *that plentifulness follows painfulness*, and *that all things are made servants to care and industry*. And therefore the Apostle Paul prescribeth diligence and industry in a lawful calling as a means of charity: *Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his own hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needs*. This is one end we should propound to our selves, in the works of our callings, namely, that through Gods blessing on our pains and endeavours, we may have, not only sufficient

for

Prov. 10: 4.
Chap. 13: 4.
Πόνω πλεονέξω
ἐπιμελείας
ἀλλὰ πάντα
γίνεται. Stob.
Eph. 4: 28.

for our own livelihood, & of them that belong unto us, but also so new-
what for the relief of others; *Solomon* describing the vertuous woman,
saith in the first place, *that she seeks wool and flax, and works willingly*
with her hands; And then, *that she stretches out her hands to the Poor,*
yea, *she stretcheth forth her hands to the needy.* Prov. 31. 13.

IV. *Be careful to prevent all superfluities in your expences.* As diligence
in your Callings, so frugality in your spending, is a special means for
the practise of Charity; *Frugality*, saith *Justin*, is the mother of virtue; *Genetrix virtutum*.
I am sure it is the foundation and supporter of Charity; For let a
mans estate be never so great, yet if there be not frugality used in the
management thereof, there will be but little found for works of chari-
ty. And on the other side, though a mans estate be but mean and low
in the world, yet if there be frugality used in the management of it,
there will be ever somewhat for charitable uses. As therefore thou de-
sirest to be charitable, be careful to prevent all unnecessary expences;
I mean, let not thy apparel be too costly; for how can it be expected,
that they should be charitable, ready to distribute to the necessities of
others, who lay out the greatest part of their estates upon their backs.
Neither let thy feasting be too frequent, nor too chargeable; which is
noted for one of the sins of the old World, who were given to eating, as
the word in the Original properly signifieth. Neither let thy Recreations
be too expensive, in playing more for money than for refreshment:
Oh that such of you who spend so much time and money on your Re-
creations; as if God had sent you into the world, and given you the
good things of the world, for no other end than to follow your plea-
sures; would consider what a fearful reckoning you are to make at the
day of Judgment, not only of your precious time lavishly mispent, but
also of your estate wickedly lost, or wasted; when in thy account there
shall be found so much wasted in gaming and pleasures, and so little gi-
ven to the poor. Mat. 24. 36.

V. *Set apart something out of thine incomes and receipts, as a sacred
stock for charitable uses.* For,

1. Hereby thou wilt be fitted and prepared with matter for such
uses, having always somewhat by thee, to give upon any good occa-
sion.

2. By this means thou wilt more readily and willingly, more freely
and liberally contribute to the needs and necessities of others, ha-

*Ad opes bonos
resque expen-
dos, ad cumu-
landos divitias,
furiosa est nostra
libido, insat
cupiditas.*
Calv. Inst. l. 3. c. 7.

ving a stock by thee for that very end and purpose. All men naturally are hard-hearted, and close-handed, and thereupon are very hardly perswaded to part with any thing considerable for charitable uses. But this consecrating before-hand a part of thine estate for the use of the poor, will cause thy charity to flow out more freely and bountifully.

Now a sacred stock for the Poor may be raised two ways?

1. Cor. 16. 1, 2.

1. By setting apart something every Lords Day, out of thy comings in the week before, according as God hath prospered thee; which practice we find prescribed unto us, by the direction of the Holy Ghost, and warranted unto us by the Apostolical authority; for saith the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week (which is the Lords Day) let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him; that is, according to the ability wherewith God hath blessed him, let him set apart something for the relief of the poor, especially the poor Saints.

This rule I would commend to such who live upon their daily labour. But for those Merchants, Citizens, and Trades-men, who sell much of their wares upon trust, & know not certainly at the weeks end what they have gained; I would advise such, when they have call up their accounts at the years end, to set apart something of their comings in that year, according as God hath prospered them for charitable uses; as they expect Gods blessing upon their trading the year following.

Gen. 28. 22.

2. By consecrating unto God a certain portion of thy yearly incomes and revenues for charitable uses. What this portion should be I dare not determine, the Scriptures being silent therein, only in the general we are commanded to give out proportionably to what God hath given unto us, that they who are rich in this worlds goods, be rich in good works; But this I can say, that the most that I have heard or read of, who have taken this course to consecrate unto God a certain portion of their estate to charitable uses, have followed the example of Jacob, in giving a tenth part unto God. And as God did exceedingly bless Jacob after his vow, so likewise hath he blessed divers others after their vow unto God.

* Mr Tho Gataker, in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of Mr. Jo. Parker, Merchant and Citizen of London.

An eminent Divine of this City, now with God, in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of a Merchant, speaking of his Charity, saith, that at his first effectual call, among other things he then resolved upon, this

this was one, to set a part every year a tenth of his gain for the relief of the poor; and that God from that time forward abundantly advanced his estate.

Another eminent Divine in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of the Lord Harrington, speaking of his *Charity*, declared, that in his life time he gave the tenth part of his yearly revenue to the poor. Mr. Stock

And from mine own experience I can tell you of one yet living, who finding little coming in by his trade, resolved upon two things.

1. To be more careful in Sanctifying the Lords Day.
2. To set apart the tenth of his increase for charitable uses. Whereupon he gained so much in a few years, that he gave over his Calling, and ever since liveth upon his Rents.

Many like instances I could give you of some that are Dead, and others yet living, who have devoted, some a tenth, and others a fifth part of their whole estate to pious and charitable uses. Which I do not propound as a General Rule to all good Christians; for some there are who have no more than is necessary for the comfortable support of themselves and family, from whom less is required for the relief of others. But I question whether such, whom the Lord hath blessed with a plentiful estate, so that their necessary expenses are, or might be, far less than their incomes, can be accounted rich in good works, unless they give at least a tenth part of their whole yearly income to charitable uses. I say of their whole yearly income, without first deducting any part thereof for diet, cloaths, or other necessary expences; for the tenth of the remainder will be a very inconsiderable proportion for a rich man to devote to charity, and far short of that which the Scripture seems to call for. It is recorded of the *Jews*, that very many amongst the richer sort, who are devout in their Religion, do usually give away a tenth part of their estate to charitable uses. And is it not very unbecoming *Christians*, who are rich in this worlds Goods, to fall short of the *Jews* herein?

Having thus done with the means on our part to be performed for attaining unto this Grace of Charity.

Come we now to the Motives, to quicken us up to a conscientious performance of the works of it. I shall touch only upon these Four.

M m 2

1. The

1. The Excellency of the Duty.
2. The Piety which it containeth in it.
3. The Profit which ariseth from it.
4. The Damage which follows upon the neglect thereof.

I. The first Motive or Inducement to Charity may be taken from the excellency thereof. I suppose that all will grant that the greatest excellency that a creature can attain unto, is to be like his Creator. That excellency wherein man was at first created, is thus set out, *God created man in his own Image; that is, in his own likeness.* And that excellency wherewith we shall be Glorified in Heaven, is set out by our likeness to Christ; for it is said, *Our bodies shall then be fashioned like unto his glorious body, yea, in the whole man, when he shall appear; then we shall be like him.*

Gen. 1. 26, 27.

Phil. 1. 11.

1 Joh. 3. 2.

Now while we live on earth, there is nothing wherein we can shew our selves more like unto God, than in shewing mercy, and in succouring such as stand in need. When God sets himself to proclaim his Name, he most insisteth upon his *mercifulness and goodness.* Christ himself doth press this Motive to enforce this Duty, thus, *[Be ye merciful, as your Father is merciful.]* The excellency of Charity doth herein further appear, that Christ hath set the poor in his own room; inasmuch as they who relieve the poor, do therein relieve Christ himself. So much doth Christ acknowledge, where he saith to such as succoured the poor, *Inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Is it not an excellent thing to relieve Christ? They then that relieve the poor, do an excellent work. As it is a great aggravation of persecuting the true professors of the Faith, because therein they persecute Christ himself, as is implied under this Divine voice that affrighted *Saul*, while he was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* So it is a great commendation of true Charity, that Christ himself is relieved thereby.

Exod. 34. 6.

Luk. 6. 36.

Mat. 25. 40.

Act. 9. 1, 4.

Jam. 1. 27.

II. Another Motive is the Piety, which in and by performing this duty of Alms-giving is manifested. Piety, I say to God. For *pure Religion and undefiled before God, is this, to visit the Fatherless, and Widows in their affliction.* Here he puts two particulars, for all kinds of Charity: And by this phrase, *Pure Religion before God is this,* he intends four things.

1. That

1. That it is but a meer shew of Religion that is without charity.

2. That true Religion will make men charitable.

3. That Charity will prove men to be truly Religious.

4. That works of Charity are as acceptable to God, as Duties of Religion. For God accounts Charity *an odour of a sweet smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, and well-pleasing unto him.* The poor and needy are to God as the Altars of burnt-offerings, and incense were under the Law. Those things which were laid on them; and offered up, were given to the Lord, and as a gift accepted by him. Even so are Alms given to the poor, the poor are the Altar, Alms the Sacrifice. Now who would not dispose of that which he hath, as God may account it given to him, and answerably accept it? On this very ground doth the Apostle incite the Hebrews to this duty, in this manner, *To do good, and to communicate forget not; for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased.* Thus we see how works of Charity are not only useful and profitable to man, but also acceptable and well-pleasing to God, which consideration addeth much life to the Duty here pressed.

Phil. 4. 18.

Heb. 13. 16.

III. A third Motive is, *the manifold profit wherewith it is rewarded.* Profit and advantage is the Motive, which, for the most part, spurs men on to labour and take pains, to rise early, and sit up late, to venture goods, life, and all they have. Witness the pains, travels, and watchings and adventures of Labourers, Work-men, Trades-men, Farmers, Merchants, Mariners, &c. yet that profit which they aim at, is but earthly and temporary; and their hope of attaining it uncertain. Surely works of Charity give an assured hope of a far greater, and better profit than earth can afford.

Omnis suavis utilis, ad eamque rapimus nec facere aliter ulla modo possumus, Cic. Offic. 3.

In general it is promised, *That if we cast our bread upon the waters, we shall find it after many days;* that is, if we give Alms to the poor, where all we do may seem to be cast away, as if it were thrown into the Sea; yet in due time will it return to us with advantage. And lest any should be discouraged from doing works of Charity, our Saviour assur-eth us, *That whosoever giveth but a cup of cold water (which is one of the least acts of Charity we can perform) shall in no wise lose his reward.*

Fecundus est ager pauperum, cito redditus donantibus fructum, Aug. Serm. de Divite, Mat. 10. 42.

If in special it be demanded what profit is there of Charity? I answer, (as the Apostle did of Circumcision) *much every way.* Yea, I Rom. 7. 12.

may

1 Tim. 4. 8. *may say of Charity, as the Apostle doth of Piety, It is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

In this life is promised.

Prov. 13. 17. *1. Sufficiency. He that giveth to the poor shall not lack; that is, he shall be secured from want and penury; God will not suffer him to be brought to penury, who hath been charitable to the poor.*

Prov. 3. 9, 10. *2. Not only sufficiency, but likewise abundance; For saith the Wise-man, Honour the Lord with thy Substance, by giving freely and cheerfully to charitable and pious uses; So shall thy Barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new-Wine, which is an hyperbolical expression, implying plenty and abundance.*

Deut. 15. 10. *3. Good success in what he enterprizeth. According to that of Moses, Thou shalt surely give him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.*

Psal. 41. 1. *4. Deliverance out of trouble. For saith the Psalmist, Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*

Verf. 2. *5. Protection against enemies; As it followeth in the next verse, Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.*

Verf. 3. *6. Succour in sickness; as the Prophet goes on, The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, that is, the Lord will comfort and support him in his sickness, and at length restore his strength again. Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness; that is, thou wilt give him ease and rest, as they do to sick men that make their beds.*

7. To pass by other particulars, Blessedness, which comprizeth under it all manner of Commodities, is promised to the Charitable person, Prov. 22. 9. And in Psal. 41. 2. It is said, He shall be blessed upon the earth; yea, and at the resurrection of the just, Luke 14. 14.

Psal. 37. 26. *8. This promise is extended to his posterity; for his seed shall be blessed.*

These and other like promises of temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings, being made by the Lord God of Truth, may with much confidence be rested upon. For Gods Words are Deeds, his Promises Performances.

Mat. 25. 34. *In the life to come, merciful men shall inherit the Kingdom prepared for them, from the foundation of the world.*

There

There are, among others, two Metaphors often used by the Holy Ghost, in setting out Alms-giving, which do much amplify the commodity thence arising.

One is taken from *lending*; the other from *sowing*.

1. Alms-giving is set forth in Scripture by *lending*; yea, to such a lending, whereby we have not only the principal restored, but with great encrease. And whereas such as put forth their money unto men, can expect but six in the hundred; If we in obedience to the command of God, shall freely part with our money to the use of the poor, for their relief, we shall receive an hundred for six, yea, an hundred for one, and eternal life to boot. And we need not to doubt of the payment; for though the poor be never so unable, yet we have an all-sufficient Surety, even God himself, who hath undertaken to pay whatsoever is thus put forth, according to that of the Wise-man, *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.* Where you have Gods counterbond to save you harmless, in which he both acknowledgeth the debt, and promiseth payment. And what better security can any man desire than a bond under Gods own hand? The consideration whereof should me thinks make us willing to embrace any opportunity of putting out our money to this great advantage. Mat. 25. 30. Prov. 19. 17.

2. As for the other Metaphor of *sowing*, it is in Scripture applied to Alms-giving, under this phrase, *He hath dispersed.* As the Husband-man disperseth his seed which he soweth in the earth; so doth the Alms-giver his Alms, therefore this is added by way of exposition, *He hath given to the poor.* The Apostle also applieth unto Alms-giving this proverbial speech, *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully.* Now what is it that ordinarily bringeth forth a greater increase than sowing seed in fertile Ground? It is said of *Isaac*, that he sowed in the Land, and received in the same year an hundred-fold. And Christ saith, that good ground beareth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. Now Alms-giving is one of those things that shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. Psal. 112. 9. 1 Cor. 9. 6. Gen 26. 12. Mat. 13. 8.

If therefore profit and advantage may be a Motive to stir us up unto any thing, surely it should be a motive to incite us unto liberality

in

in Alms-giving, to be bountiful in contributing to the relief of the poor.

For it is a most certain truth, that *giving to the poor, is the surest and safest way of getting.* For though Husband-men may sometimes lose the benefit of their seed sown, through mill-dews, or unseasonable weather; and such as put their money to use may come short of their principal: yet he who with an honest, and sincere heart giveth to the poor, shall in no wise lose his reward. For as the Wise-man speaketh, *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth*, Prov. 11. 24. intimating unto us, that this scattering is the best way of encreasing. And indeed so it is; for hath not our Saviour promised, *That if we give, it shall be given unto us, good measure pressed down, and shaken together?* Here God gives us as it were a bill of his hand, and enters into bond, and becomes Surety with the poor, that what we give shall be repayed with advantage. This is a *Paradox* to worldly men, that *giving should be the surest and safest way of getting and encreasing*, yet nothing more clearly laid down in the Scripture, and found to be true by the experience of Gods People.

Luke 6. 35.

4. The fourth Motive and Inducement is *the damage which may ensue upon the neglect of Alms-giving.* Though it argue a kind of servile disposition to be moved with fear of loss or gain, to a duty; yet of that disposition are many; and in that respect this may be added as an Inducement to the Duty.

The damage that may arise upon the neglect of Charity, when it ought to be shewed, is in the kind thereof as large; as the fore-mentioned benefits of performing the duty, in the kind of it.

For neglect of the Duty doth not only cause a forfeiture of all the fore-mentioned benefits arising from the performance thereof, but also pulleth upon the neglecters head, many evils. Where the Wise-man saith, *The merciful man, doth good to his own soul; he addeth, but he that is cruel, troubleth his own flesh.* Soul and Flesh are the two essential parts of a man; both the one and the other are Synecdochically put for the whole man; even for the person. By a cruel man, is meant an unmerciful, or hard-hearted man; for he is opposed to a merciful man. The meaning then of this Proverb is this; As a merciful man doth good, not only to his poor brother to whom he sheweth mercy, but also to himself: So an hard-hearted man doth not only grieve his distressed neighbour in affording him no succour, but also brings much damage to himself. *For he that withholdeth more than is meet, cometh to poverty.*

Prov. 11. 17.

Verf. 24.

With-

With-holding is there opposed to scattering, which word hath reference to casting or sowing seed on the earth to bring forth a crop; and thereby is meant Alms-giving. On the contrary, *With-holding more than is meet*, implies a denial of Alms, when there is just cause to give. Justice and equity require this Duty (as we have before shewed) so as that phrase doth much aggravate this kind of unmercifulness: and as a just punishment thereof, that which covetous men by refusing to give, seek to prevent, shall fall upon them, even poverty.

And if in any distress they shall be forced to seek help of others, even they shall be neglected as they neglected others. The Wiseman telleth us much in these words; *Who so stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, and not be heard.* Not only other men, but also God himself will refuse to hear his cry. Dives, who refused to relieve *Lazarus*, could not obtain any to afford him a drop of water to cool his tongue, when he was tormented in Hell flames. It is expressly said, that *he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy.* James 2. 13. For God deals with men according to their dealing with others. *Prov. 11. 13.* *Luk. 16. 14.* *Mat. 18. 33.*

Finally, as blessings are promised to merciful men, so curses are denounced against unmerciful men. As under blessings, all manner of good things are comprized, so under curses, all manner of evils. Unmerciful men shall have the curses of men, and *people shall curse them.* And at the great Day of Judgment, they shall be pronounced cursed by the Great Judge. *For then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: For I was an hungred and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink, &c.* *Prov. 11. 36.* *Mat. 25. 41.* *Mat. 25. 42.* *Mat. 25. 43.* *Mat. 25. 44.* *Mat. 25. 45.* *Mat. 25. 46.* *Mat. 25. 47.* *Mat. 25. 48.* *Mat. 25. 49.* *Mat. 25. 50.* *Mat. 25. 51.* *Mat. 25. 52.* *Mat. 25. 53.* *Mat. 25. 54.* *Mat. 25. 55.* *Mat. 25. 56.* *Mat. 25. 57.* *Mat. 25. 58.* *Mat. 25. 59.* *Mat. 25. 60.* *Mat. 25. 61.* *Mat. 25. 62.* *Mat. 25. 63.* *Mat. 25. 64.* *Mat. 25. 65.* *Mat. 25. 66.* *Mat. 25. 67.* *Mat. 25. 68.* *Mat. 25. 69.* *Mat. 25. 70.* *Mat. 25. 71.* *Mat. 25. 72.* *Mat. 25. 73.* *Mat. 25. 74.* *Mat. 25. 75.* *Mat. 25. 76.* *Mat. 25. 77.* *Mat. 25. 78.* *Mat. 25. 79.* *Mat. 25. 80.* *Mat. 25. 81.* *Mat. 25. 82.* *Mat. 25. 83.* *Mat. 25. 84.* *Mat. 25. 85.* *Mat. 25. 86.* *Mat. 25. 87.* *Mat. 25. 88.* *Mat. 25. 89.* *Mat. 25. 90.* *Mat. 25. 91.* *Mat. 25. 92.* *Mat. 25. 93.* *Mat. 25. 94.* *Mat. 25. 95.* *Mat. 25. 96.* *Mat. 25. 97.* *Mat. 25. 98.* *Mat. 25. 99.* *Mat. 25. 100.*

Having thus done with the *Motives*, I shall close this Discourse with answering some *Objections*, which keep back many from a conscientious discharge of this Duty.

Object. 1. Some object their great charge, having a wife and many children to provide for; and are ready to say with the Apostle, *That Parents ought to lay up for their Children.* And if any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an Infidel. How then can we be liberal to the poor?

Answer. I deny not but Parents ought to provide for their Children.

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(6)

so far as they may with a good conscience. But know, that the same Apostle who commands you to lay up for the poor Children, doth likewise command you to lay out a considerable part of your estate for the succour and relief of others. As Gal. 6. 10. *As we have opportunity let us do good unto all, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.* And Heb. 13. 16. *But to do good, and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.* If therefore you would approve your selves sincere Christians, you must bear an equal and impartial respect to all and every the commands of the Lord, making conscience of one Duty as well as of another.

2. The greater thy love, the stronger thine affections are to thy Children, the more liberal and bountiful shouldst thou be to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ: that thereby thou mayest entail Gods blessing upon the persons and estate of thy Children. I am sure thou wilt grant that without Gods blessing, all thou shalt bequeath unto thy children will little avail them; and what better course canst thou take to procure Gods blessing upon that part of thy estate which thou shalt leave them, than freely to communicate some part thereof to pious and charitable uses? For as the Psalmist expresseth it, *The seed of the merciful shall be blessed.* Whereby is implied, that thy mercy and liberality to the poor, will entail Gods blessing upon thy children.

Very solicitous many are to entail their Lands and Houses on their Posterity; that they may continue in the same family: But I know no surer way, than in their life time, to communicate a considerable part of their estate to the poor. And thus by taking somewhat from your Childrens Portion for the relief of the poor, you may exceedingly advance their estate. Hath God blessed thee with Children? in Christian discretion then thou shouldst be charitable, that thereby thou mayest procure Gods blessing, both on thy self and posterity. For thy sparing and withholding from the poor, to make thy Children rich, may prove the subversion and ruine of thine house and children.

*Posteri heredi
prestant quic
quid misericor
dia causa de
ejus portione de
traxeris, Aug.
de tempore
Serm. 76.*

3. Though thou oughtest to lay up some competent portions for thy children, yet ought not that to be a pretence against laying out a portion of thine estate here on the poor. For know that the poor have a right unto part of thine estate, as well as thy children, though not unto so great a part. In which respect the Spirit of God calleth that part of the rich mans stock which he can well spare, *the poor mans due*, unto whom

whom of right it doth belong; for saith he, *Prov. 3. 27. Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.* Wherupon said an ancient Father, *It is the bread of the hungry which moulders in thy Cupboard; It is the garment of the naked which lies upon the floor; It is the gold of the poor which lieth rusting in thy Chest.* So that thy relieving the poor, is not only an act of mercy, left to thy choice to do, or not to do; but also of justice, to the performance whereof thou standest bound. And therefore what St. Paul saith of himself concerning the preaching of the Gospel, *Necessity is laid upon me, yea, who is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel?* The like should all Rich men especially say of themselves, *necessity is laid upon us, to give out a part of our estate for the relief of the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, and woe be unto us, if we do it not.*

4. It is a great mistake in Parents, that because it is their Duty to make some provision for their children, therefore they are bound to lay up all that possibly they can scrape together for their use, without giving any considerable part towards the relief of the poor; for thereby they manifestly declare, that they prefer their childrens temporal good, before their own spiritual and eternal good, and hazard the salvation of their own souls, for the advancement of their childrens estate. Oh how little comfort will it be to you in Hell-torments, to think that you have lost heavenly joys, for the gaining of some earthly enjoyments for your Children? If therefore you have little or no charity for others, yet have some for your own souls by a liberal contribution to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, and that according to your own ability, and their necessity.

Object. 2. Some object their poor and mean estate, pretending they have not wherewithal to supply the wants, and relieve the necessities of others.

Answer. 1. Though thou pleadest poverty to excuse thy not giving towards the supply of the needy and necessitous, yet it is to be feared, that thy plea is not real but feigned, a meer pretence, because thou canst find money enough to buy rich and costly apparel for thy self, wife and children; money enough to pamper thy belly, and to feast thy rich neighbours, friends, and acquaintance; money enough for the gratifying thy sinfull lusts and pleasures; when thou canst find little or nothing for the cloathing the naked backs of the poor members of Jesus Christ, nothing for the filling of their empty bellies, no-

thing for their comfort and support. Oh how sad will thy reckoning be at the great day of judgment, when thou shalt hear, so much spent in cloaths, so much in costly diet, so much in satisfying thy carnal lusts and pleasures, and so little in relieving the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ.

2. Though thy plea be real, that thou art in truth in a low and mean estate, yet oughtest thou to give something, when thou meetest with those who are poorer than thy self, especially if they be in great necessity, *Eph. 4. 28.* The Apostle exhorteth poor men, even such as work for their living; so to labour, that they may have not only to maintain themselves and family, but also to relieve the necessities of others: *Let him labour*, saith the Apostle, *working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* The deep poverty of the *Macedonians*, we read, kept them not from contributing to the poor Saints at *Jerusalem*, who were poorer than themselves.

2 Cor. 8. 3.

Mar. 12. 43.

2 Cor. 8. 12.

Who could plead greater poverty than the poor *Widow* in the Gospel, who having but two Mites, cast them both into the Treasury? of whom our Saviour giveth this testimony, *That she cast more into the treasury than the rich; for all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.* An half-penny or farthing of that little which a poor man giveth, is more in Christs reckoning, than a whole mass of money out of a rich mans treasure. Say not therefore I am poor, and have but little, thinking thereby to excuse thy not giving; for thou canst not be poorer than that poor *Widow*; but of a little give a little, and it will be accepted; for if there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. God looketh not so much to the greatness of the gift, as to the quantity of the store out of which it is given, and the largeness of the affections wherewith it is given.

Object. Some are ready to object, and say, they live in dangerous times, and know not what troubles may befall them, and therefore it will be wisdom, to keep what they have.

Ans. 1. The more dangerous the times are, the more reason thou hast to give out of thy store towards the relief of others. For

Ecc. 9. 10.

1. Thou knowest not how long thou mayest enjoy thy life or estate, whatsoever therefore thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; that is, whatsoever ability or opportunity thou hast of doing good, do it, as

with

with all diligence, so speedily. And saith the Wise-man, Give a portion Chap. 11. 2. to seven, and also to eight; as if he had said, let thy liberality be large and bountiful, not limiting it to few, but distributing to many, mark his reason in the next words; *for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth*; i. e. what troublesome times may be. I have read of an Husbandman, who hearing of the approach of an Army, and fearing thereby the loss of all his corn, caused as much as possibly he could to be carried into the City, and committed the custody thereof to a friend of his. In like manner let the apprehensions of dangerous times prevail with thee, to deliver some considerable part of thy estate unto the poor members of Christ, whereby it will be best preserved from loss and spoils.

2. Thy liberality to the poor, will be a notable means to free thine heart from those anxious and distrustful fears of evil times, which do usually possess the hearts of unmerciful men; as the Psalmist seemeth to imply, Psalm 112. 7, 9. *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord.* The reason whereof he rendereth, verse 9. *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor*; therefore he shall not be afraid of evil tidings. And indeed such have least ground of fear; For

1. God hath promised to deliver such from the evil to come, as Psal. 41. 1. *Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*

2. God hath promised, that though they should fall into troublesome times, yet they shall find abundance of sweet peace and comfort in their own souls; for saith the Lord, *If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, i. e. If thou shalt afford unto him that which may supply his necessity, and satisfy his hunger, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day.* Where light signifieth peace and comfort, as darkness signifieth affliction. So that the Prophets meaning is, that merciful men shall have peace and comfort, in the most troublesome and uncomfortable times; which if it were seriously considered, would be a great encouragement to us, to abound in works of mercy.

Object. 4. Some object and say, If I be so full in giving, I may want my self before I dye.

Answer. 1. Doth the Husbandman forbear to sow his seed for fear

fear of want? Nay, rather doth he not with a plentiful hand sow his seed, that he may prevent want; being confident that by sowing his seed, he shall in due time reap it again with such encrease, that thereby he shall be enabled to sustain himself and family. So that this Objection is a groundless fear, arising from a distrustful heart, contrary to that of the Wise-man, *Prov. 28. 27. He that giveth to the poor shall not lack;* viz. any thing which God seeth to be good and needful for him. Nay, by not giving, thou art likeliest to come to want; for saith the spirit of God, *There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but is tender to poverty.* So that keeping back and hoarding up, is the readiest way to want and penury, whereas giving to the poor, according to that God hath given unto us, is the best means to prevent penury.

Prov. 11. 24.

2. Thou needst not fear want by giving; for thereby thou wilt both secure thy stock, and increase thy store.

*Terrenus servan-
da amittimus,
largiendo fir-
vamus, laedor.*

1. What thou givest to the poor, with an honest and sincere heart, will secure the rest of thy estate. For as in a state Politick, the Leiger-Ambassadors that are sent abroad to lie in forraign Kingdoms, secure our peaceable state at home. In like manner, that which thou disperdest and sendest abroad to the poor, doth secure the rest at home. So that in truth our earthly goods are lost by keeping, and kept by giving away.

Luk. 6. 38.

2. That which thou givest away to the poor will increase thy store. For Give, saith our Saviour, *and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.* By which variety of expressions, our Saviour declareth, that charitable men shall not only receive back again from God, what they give to the poor, but abundantly more; which the Wise-man implieth, where he saith, *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth;* intimating that the more we scatter the seeds of our beneficence, the greater our increase will be. And as it followeth in the next verse, *The liberal soul shall be made fat;* i. e. he that is bountiful towards others, shall be enriched himself. *And he that watereth,* viz. others with his store, *shall be watered also himself;* i. e. shall be abundantly watered with the blessing of God, that he may have wherewith to do more good. Whereupon saith the Apostle Paul, *He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, but he that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully:* Thereby hinting unto us, the great gain and encrease that we shall receive by a free and liberal contribution,

3. Cor. 9. 6.

tribution, to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ: which Job acknowledged, when he said (Chap. 29. 13.) *the blessing of him that was ready to perish, came upon me; i. e. I had their prayers; and the Lord blessed me extraordinarily for relieving them.*

Some question there is about the lawfulness of putting out money to use. But this is out of question, that to put out a considerable part of thine estate to charitable uses, is, as a lawful, so the most gainful usury in the world; for thereby thou shalt receive, instead of six in the hundred, an hundred for six. If therefore thou wilt be wisely covetous, fall upon the practice of this Christian Usury, knowing that the more thou shalt adventure therein, the greater will be thy gain, and the more bountifully thou shalt receive.

Elemosyna non est divitiarum dispendium, sed descendi pati- ut compendium, quassusq; omnium uberrima.

Object. 5. Some object that what they give unto the poor, is utterly lost.

Ans. 1. This is directly contrary to what the Spirit of God saith, *Prov. 19. 17. He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he repay him again.* If that which thou givest to the poor be repaid thee again, how can it be said to be lost? indeed the poor unto whom thou givest, are unable to repay thee, yet having such an all-sufficient surety as God himself, who hath undertaken the repayment, thou needst not doubt thereof.

2. It is a great mistake in men, to think that what they give away to charitable uses, is utterly lost. For in truth a covetous scraping, and fordid hoarding up our wealth, is the only way of losing it. But as I have formerly shewed, a cheerful distributing part thereof to the poor, is the surest way of securing our stock, and encreasing our store. I never yet met with the man, who could say that he was a loser in his estate by what he gave away to charitable uses. And this I can affirm, that very many have, and are still ready to acknowledge, that as the Widows oyl encreased by pouring out; so that their store hath multiplied and encreased by giving away to good uses.

3. What thou givest to the poor is not lost, but sent to Heaven before thee. It is reported of *Cyrus*, that he should say, that by doing good he hoarded up riches for himself. But sure I am, that by communicating part of thy goods to the poor Saints and Servants of God, thou layest up treasure for thy self in Heaven.

Mat 6. 20.

This is the very argument, wherewith the Apostle in the words of the

the

*Quod pauperi
damus ante nos
premittimus,
Aug.*

the Text, enforceth this Duty of liberality to the poor; for saith he, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good; that they be rich in good works; ready to distribute, willing to communicate: Mark his reason in the next words, laying up in store for themselves, a good foundation against the time to come; Where the Apostle intimateth, that by laying out on the poor, we do in truth lay up in store for our selves. Look therefore how much thou layest out here on good uses, by a Bill of Exchange, as it were, thou shalt receive as much, yea, much more in the Kingdom of Heaven; To which agreeth that of St. Augustine, Whatsoever we give to the poor, we send before us, and we shall find that in Heaven, which we give here on Earth.

I have met with a notable Story, to this purpose, which I shall the rather relate, because I have known some so affected upon the hearing thereof, as that they have taken up present resolutions, to communicate more liberally to the necessities of the poor, than ever they did in their lives before. The story is this,

Synelius a good Bishop of Cyrene, laboured much, and a long time with one Evagrius an Heathen Philosopher; to convert him to the Christian Faith, but all in vain; The Philosopher still objecting that the Christian Religion taught many strange and improbable things; among others, That he that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord; and he that giveth to the poor and needy, shall have treasure in Heaven, and shall receive an hundred-fold from Christ, together with eternal life: Things, said he, to be derided rather than believed. The good Bishop notwithstanding ceased not to travel with him, assuring him by many arguments, that these things were true, and at last prevailed, so that the Philosopher and all his Children were baptized. A while after he cometh to Synelius, and bringeth with him three hundred pounds of Gold for the poor, bids him take it, but would have a Bill under his hand, that Christ should repay it him in another world. Synelius took the money for the poor, and gave him such a Bill under his hand as he desired. Afterwards the Philosopher being near his death, commanded his Sons, that when they buried him, they should put Synelius Bill into his hand in the grave, which they did. The third day after he was buried, the Philosopher seemed to appear to Synelius in the night, and said to him, [Come to my Sepulchre where I lye, and take thy Bill; for I have received the Debt, and am satisfied; which for thy assurance, I have subscribed it with mine own hand.] The Bishop not well knowing the meaning hereof, sent to his Sons, who told him all, whereupon taking

taking them and the chief men of the City with him, he went to the grave, and found the paper in the hand of the Corps, thus subscribed, [*Ego Euvagrius Philosophus, tibi Sanctissimo Domino Synesio Episcopo, salutem: Accepi debitum in his literis manu tua conscriptum, satisfactumque mihi est; & nullum contra te habeo jus propter aurum quod dedi tibi, & per te Christo Deo & Salvatore nostro.*] *That is, I Euvagrius the Philosopher, to the most Holy Sir, Bish. p Synesius, greeting: I have received the debt which in this paper is written with thy hand, and I am satisfied, and I have no action against thee: for the Gold which I gave thee and by thee to Christ, our God and Saviour.*

This Story, I say, I was willing to relate at large, not only because it passeth in antiquity for a great (though strange) truth, but also because as I said, I have known it reported to some, with such good effect and success, as I hope and heartily wish it may have upon thy Spirit.

4. Thy works of Charity to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, will hereafter be rewarded with everlasting glory and happiness in Heaven. So much our Saviour expresseth by declaring, that the Kingdom of Heaven was from the foundation of the world, prepared for the merciful; who had shewed themselves bountiful to the poor members of Jesus Christ, by cloathing the naked, feeding the hungry, &c. And saith our Saviour, *Mat. 10. 41. He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet shall receive a Prophets reward; and he that receiveth a Righteous man in the name of a Righteous man, shall receive a Righteous mans reward.* As by receiving a Righteous man, in the name of a Righteous man, is to shew kindness to him for his Righteousness sake; so by receiving a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, is not only a receiving of his Message and Ministry, but also a receiving of his person, by shewing kindness unto him, either in entertaining of him or contributing to his needs and necessities, and that as he is a Minister of the Gospel. And by the Prophets and Righteous mans reward, which such shall receive as relieve them is meant, that surpassing and excellent weight of glory in Heaven, which cannot be expressed by the tongue of men or Angels. Not that their works of charity do merit that Glorious reward, but in regard of the promise of God made to all those, who in faith apply themselves to the practise of good works.

Objct. 6. Many there are who make a great profession of Religion, but manifest little power thereof in their lives, being as

backward to any good work, and as barren therein as any who-
soever.

Ans. I must confess there is more truth in this objection, than in any I have yet met withall. For I cannot but acknowledge, there are too many whose leaves of profession are very broad, but their fruits of charity and liberality are very small: who are a shame to Religion, a reproach to Christianity, and a scandal to profession.

But this may be taken for an answer, That whereas many who make a profession of Religion, are barren in good works: questionless they are no sincere Christians, no true Converts, but meer outside Professours. For most certain it is, that *the elect of God put on bowels of mercy*, as the Apostle *Paul* speaketh: Therefore whosoever he be that having this worlds good doth make a profession of Religion, and yet shutteth up his bowels of compassion from his poor brother, and will not communicate towards his necessities, let his profession be never so specious and glorious in the eyes of men, yet certainly he is but a rotten professour, and dissembling hypocrite in the sight of God; for saith the Apostle *St. James*, *Pure religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father is this; to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction*: Implying, that works of charity are clear evidences of the truth of our Religion, and of the sincerity of our profession. If you look into the Scripture, you shall scarce read of a man truly Godly, but he was charitable; nay, according to his eminence in Godliness, he was eminent in works of charity, to instance in some few.

Abraham, the Father of the faithful, as he was eminent in Godliness, so was he eminent in Hospitality, which is one of the noblest works of Charity: For we read, how *Abraham* stood at his Tent-door, and no sooner saw strangers passing by, but called them in, and gave them entertainments.

As there was none like *Job* in his pays for Piety and Godliness, of whom God himself giveth this testimony, *That there was none like Job in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil*: So neither was there any like *Job* for liberality. Note what he saith of himself, *The blessing of him that was ready to perish, came upon me*; i. e. I had many good prayers, and well-wishes from them, whom I had relieved in their low and perishing condition, and I caused the Widows heart to sing for joy; i. e. by my bounty and liberality to her in her necessity, I gave her great cause of hearty joy. And afterwards *Job* declareth, how he had no, according to the manner of covetous & char-
lith

Col 3. 12.

Jam. 1. 27.

Gen. 18. 1, 2.

Job 1. 8.

Chap. 29. 13.

lith persons, eaten his meat alone, without giving any thereof to the hungry Orphans. Neither had he sent any parish for want of clothing: Union which expressions are implied, his readiness to feed the hungry, and cloath the naked, with otherlike acts of charity.

It is recorded to the perpetual praise and commendation of good *Obadiab*, that in the time of famine and persecution, he not only hid the Prophets of God by fifty in a Cave, from the cruelty of *Jehoshaphat*, but that also in that extreme dearth, there sustained them with food, and supplied their necessities. 1 King 13.4.

We read of *Cornelius*, who as he was a godly and devout man, so he was very charitable, for the Spirit of God giveth this testimony of him, That he was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the poor: He was not only charitable, but did abound in works of charity, giving much alms to the poor. Act. 10.4.

We likewise read of *Gaius*, who is recorded to be a Godly, Wealthy Citizen of *Corinth*, that he did usually in his house entertain, not only the Apostle *Paul*, but also all Christians resorting to that City. Rom. 16.23.

The Apostle *Paul*, who was an holy, zealous Christian, was likewise charitable; for in his Epistle to *Timothy*, reckoning up some of his graces, as his faith, patience, long-suffering, &c. he mentions *Charity*. 2 Tim. 3.10.

Yea, we read of *Zachens*, that though before his conversion, he was a most covetous extortioner, yet after his conversion, he gave the half of his Goods to the poor; for said he, Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. Luke 19.8.

But the most remarkable, is the Charity of the Primitive Christians, who being converted by the Ministry of the Apostles, and having embraced the Christian Faith, it is said, that as many of them as were possessors of lands, or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, & laid them down at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made unto every man, according to his need. Thus you see it hath ever been the property of a sincere Christian, and true believer, to be charitable. And certainly whosoever by a true and lively faith, are ingrafted into Jesus Christ, cannot but be fruitful branches bringing forth the fruits of mercy and compassion, of charity and liberality towards their poor brethren. Act. 4. 34, 35.

I shall conclude therefore with a passage of a reverend Divine now with God. Mr. Rob Bolton in his Directions for a comfortable walking with God, never p. 262.

If the world hath locked up thine heart, and congealed the bowels of thy compassion towards the poor; let the blaze of thine outward profession shine

never so fair; manage the beavest representation of external holiness never so demurely; keep the times and tasks of daily duties, with never so great austerity; nay, though thou be able to amaze weaker Christians with some affected strains, and artificial fervency in Prayer; for all this, if the holy heat of brotherly love doth not warm thine heart, and upon occasion work affectionately and effectually; I dare say, thou art rotten at the heart-root, there is no true love of God in thee, no grace, no hope of salvation.

3.14. *Who so hath this worlds goods, and seeth his brother hath need, and fluttesth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Let it, I say, dissolve thy frozen-heartedness this way, and enlarge the bowels of pity towards thy poor brethren of Christ Jesus, or else never look hereafter to look him in the face with comfort, or to find mercy at that day.*

If we must aim at Assurance, what should they do, that are not able to discern their own spiritual condition?

1 Joh. 5. 13.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life.



He greatness of the mercy, in having of the Scripture is manifested by the great advantages that the Elect of God receive thereby: viz. (a) that they might be brought to close with Christ by faith unteigned, and be partakers of eternal life through him, that bad men might be made good, and that good men might be made sure of an eternal blessed state, in the life to come, whereby the Lord hath abundantly provided both for

our happiness and our comfort: for our happiness, that we may have eternal life: (b) for our comfort: that we may know we have eternal life. I cannot stay to view the context. I need not stay to explain the Text. The case of conscience to be treated of from this Scripture is this.

Since men may know that they have eternal life, what must they do, that cannot discern their spiritual Condition?

Here are two things to be performed,

First, That we may know in this life, that we shall certainly be partakers of eternal glory in the life to come. For if assurance be not possible, I can neither blame you for wanting it, nor stir you up to labour after it.

Secondly, Lay down some Rules for the getting of it, and directions,

directions, if by these rules we cannot for the present obtain it.

For the stating of the first part of the Question, concerning the possibility of getting this certain knowledge of our future Happiness, I shall lay before you these six positions.

1. Position.

c John 3. 36.

i Job. 5. 10, 12.

d Eph. 3. 3.

e Tit. 3. 3.

f 1 Tim. 2. 16.

g Job. 5. 40, 43.

Mark 2. 10.

h 1 Tim. 2. 15.

i Job 11. 20.

& 8. 3, 4.

& 8. 4.

k Luke 18. 11.

l Psal. 77. 1. to

the 10. vs. &

88. 4. 5. 16.

Mat. 10. 10.

m 1 John. 3. 14.

n 1 Pet. 2. 1.

1. An unregenerate person while (c) such can have no assurance or certain knowledge of the eternal salvation of his Immortal soul. Because as such he hath no actual interest in the promises of salvation, being without the conditions of faith and repentance, to which the promises are made, being a child of (d) wrath, (e) a slave to his lusts; a (f) captive to the Devil a (g) rejecter of the Son of God. This man hath *plague sores, tokens* of eternal death. I cannot say thou shalt be infallibly damned, because thou (h) mayest repent and believe, and thou canst not say thou shalt be saved, because thou hast not yet repented for thy sin, nor believed in the Son of God. A wicked man is not *subiectum capax*, a subject capable of this assurance, *Eph. 1. 13. In whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise.* It is not the hard stone, but the soft wax that receiveth the impression of the seal. If he hope for Salvation while he liveth, and dyeth in a natural condition, he shall lose his hope (i) and soul together: this presumption will prove self-delusion, and end in desperation. He is worse than a Pharisee (k) whether he be a private person, or a preacher, that liveth in gross sins, having the power of godliness, and discouraging holiness, that yet blesteth God for election, justification, sanctification, and assured hope of glory.

2. Position.

2. That many of Gods dear Children (l) for a long time might remain very doubtful as to their present and eternal condition, and know not what to conclude, whether they shall be damned, or whether they shall be saved. There are believers of several growths in the Church of God: (m) Fathers, young men, Children, and (n) Babes; and as in most families there are more babes and children, than grown men, so in the Church of God, there are more weak doubting Christians, than strong ones, grown up to a full assurance. A Babe may be born and yet not know it, so a man may be born again and not be sure of it. Sometimes they think they have grounds of hope, that they shall be saved, sometimes they think they have grounds of fears, that they shall be condemned: not knowing which might be most weighty, like a pair of ballances, they are at equal poise. *Zach. 14. 6. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear nor dark.*

dark. It is spoken primarily of Gods providential dispensations, towards his Church in Gospel times; For a while she should live in *Crepusculo* in twilight: in a mixt condition of light and darkness, comfort and affliction; like a man in a misty morning, that neither walketh in the dark, nor yet hath the light clear to see far before him; like *Paul* and the *Marriners* that saw neither Sun nor Stars for many days, (*o*) *Acts 27. 26.* so might it be with a particular person, in reference to his spiritual condition.

By this you see,

First, We make a difference betwixt saving faith *as such*, and a full persuasion of the heart.

Secondly, That some of those that shall be certainly saved, might not be certain that they shall be saved; for the promise is made to the grace of faith, and not to the evidence of it. To Faith as true, and not as strong; they may be sure of Heaven, and yet in their own sense, not assured of Heaven. As an Infant may be born to a great estate, and have a certain title to it, but yet he might not know it, or make it out to himself or others. So that the Question is not *de certitudine obiecti*, of the certainty of Salvation, but *de certitudine subiecti*, of the apprehension, sense, and knowledge of the believing person, concerning his salvation.

3. Position.

3. That a believer may not only in the general, gather from the word of God (*p*), from the death of Christ (*q*), from the glorious preparation God hath made (*r*), that many shall be infallibly brought to glory, but also that he in particular, shall be one of them. This must have its proof after; I therefore now pass on.

4. Position.

4. That we are not to expect any voice from Heaven, or Gods sending of an Angel, or extraordinary revelation, to make us to know that we do believe, or shall be saved, but to make use of those helps, and means appointed by God, common to all believers, but yet sufficient for the obtaining of this particular Assurance. This I put in, because the Papists grant it may be got by extraordinary revelation, but not else; As it is their wicked practise to keep the people most ignorant of those things, of which they should have most knowledge, that following them, with an implicate faith, & blind obedience, might not scruple at their Humane Traditions, and unwarrantable, and many (*s*) ridiculous Innovation, that have crept in amongst them, so they keep them most doubtful, where they should be most sure, and so the counsel

*P Mat. 8. 10. I
& 25. 34.
q Mat. 20. 28.
r 1 Pet. 1. 4. 5. 6.*

*[Bellarmine de
Baptismo, Tom.*

*3. lib. 1. cap. 25.
26, 27. mention-
eth 22. Ce-
remonies about
Baptism, Exor-
cism, Salt, Spi-
rit, Cross, Un-
ction, Wax, ca-
per lighted, in
token that the
baptized person
is translated
from the power
of darkness
unto light, &c.*

Si quis dixerit, hominem venarum & iustificatum teneri ex fide ad credendum se certo esse, ex numero predestinatorum, Anathema sit. Concil. Triden. sess. 6 can. 15. And again, Si quis dixerit, magnum illud usque in finem perseverantia donum se cepto habiturum absoluta & infallibili certitudine, nisi hoc ex speciali revelatione deduxerit, Anathema sit. Concil. Triden. sess. 5. Can. 16. * Psal. 30. 7. Can. 1. 5. * Job 9. 17. * Psal. 13. 1. with 1 Cor. 13. 12. * Job 1. 1. with Job 13. 24. Isa. 8. 17. * Isa. 59. 2. * Cant. 5. 2, 3, 6. * 2 Sam. 17. 4. 13 15. comp. Psal. 51. 8, 12. * Job 15. 11. * Isa. 57. 17.

counsel of Trent (1): If any may say that he knoweth, he shall certainly persevere, or infallibly be assured of his election, except he have this by special revelation, let him be Anathema. A wicked counsel that Anathematizeth a man for asserting that may be obtained, which God commandeth him to get, 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Make your calling, and election sure.*

5. Position. That such as have been filled with divine joy, through well-grounded apprehensions of their present grace and future glory, might lose that assurance, and that joy (u), and this may be, 1. From God acting, 1. As (x) a Sovereign Lord. 2. As a wife God putting a more eminent difference betwixt Earth and (y) Heaven. Or, 2. From the buffetings of Satan. Or, 3. From themselves, 1. For the trial and exercise of some of their graces (z). Or, 2. For correcting them for sin (a); As, 1. For their backwardness to duty (b). 2. Slothfulness in duty, 3. Frequent strong actings of pride in and after duty. 4. Letting down their spiritual watch; and so, 5. Falling into some notorious transgression (c). Or, 6. For not setting a due esteem upon the comforts of the Spirit (d). Or, 7. Insulting too much over weak believers; not exercising tender compulsion to dejected drooping Christians. 8. For their too much Earthly-mindedness. 9. Not rising presently by repentance (e); for these reasons and the like, their Sun might be eclipsed, a winter of sorrows, might follow their summer joys. They may Lose their evidence, but not their adherence; and though there shall not be any intercession of justification, yet there might be afterwards a non-apprehension of it.

6. Position.

6 That in divers men, there are divers degrees of this assurance, and in the same man different degrees at divers times, but in no man at any time, in this life perfection of degrees; For our understanding is imperfect, both as to the faculty and its acts. And though the mind is curing, yet it will not be perfectly cured in this life, from that darkness that befall it, by mans Apostacy from God. For we have but an imperfect knowledge of Faith and Love: and while we have but an imperfect knowledge of the premises, we cannot give a perfect assent to the conclusion. And no man hath such perfection of degrees, of the assurance of his salvation, in an ordinary way, as that one degree more cannot be added to the former; neither is there any repugnancy in asserting an infallible assurance, and denying a perfect assurance; for I infallibly know that there is a God, and that this

this God is good and just; and yet I have not a perfect knowledge of a deity, or of his goodness and justice; for in this life we know but in part, 1 Cor. 13. 11, 22.

There are three ways that we come to a certainty.

1. There is a certainty that comes by sense, which cannot erre about its proper object, when there is a due distance, a fit disposition of the Organ, and the medium rightly disposed: thus *Thomas* was certain of *Christ's* resurrection from the dead. *John* 20. 25. The other Disciples said unto him, we have seen the Lord, but he said unto them, except I shall in his hands the Print of the nails, and put my finger into the Print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. Verf. 27. He saith to *Thomas*, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing. Verf. 28. And *Thomas* answered and said, my Lord, and my God. Though the other Disciples told him they had seen the Lord, yet he would not take it for a certainty from their report, except he had a certainty from his own sense. But the Papists do not only deny us a certainty of faith, but also a certainty of sense; for though in the Sacrament we see it is real bread, and taste it to be real bread, and feel and handle it as real bread; yet contrary to our sense, would have us believe, and say it is transubstantiated.

2. There is a certainty of science, or knowledge arising from first principles, received by all, that are proved by their own light, that cannot be demonstrated *a priori*, because there is nothing true before them; as a man cannot shew you the Sun but by its own light: So I certainly know, that both parts of a contradiction cannot be true; so I certainly know, that the whole is greater than any particular part.

3. There is a certainty of authority, or testimony, if the testimony be humane, it begets but a moral perswasion; for no humane testimony is of necessary verity, because truth is not necessarily, but contingently and mutably in the man that gives this testimony, and the testimony hath not its cogency or validity from it self, but from the qualifications of the person that bears the testimony, whence there is a gradual certainty in humane testimonies; only God is so necessarily true, that it should imply a contradiction that he should be God, and yet lye. *God cannot lye*, Tit. 1. 2. So that a Divine testimony begets a certainty of divine Faith; for what God saith, I undoubtedly know to be true, because truth is essential to him; for if truth be necessary to the Testator, the truth of the testimony must necessarily be (f) true, so I know.

g Mar. 16. 16.

Rom. 1. 4. 5.

Heb. 11. 14.

b Mar. 5. 8.

Rom. 8. 13.

Act. 10. 4.

know that the impenitent unbelieving person that dieth without grace, and an interest in Christ, shall certainly (g) be damned, because God hath said it, as if I saw him in his misery; and I know that the Penitent, believing, self-denying, and sin-mortifying-Christian, shall be (b) saved because God hath said it, as certainly if as I saw him actually possessed of it already.

When faith hath this divine testimony to lean upon, It ariseth in some by degrees to a full assurance. There are especially four words in the Scripture, that set forth faith in its different degrees.

1. As it is said to be *ὑποστασις*, Heb. 11. 8. *The substance, subsistence, existence of things*: Looking upon things future, as certain as if they were present; among the Hebrews there is usual, a mutation of tenses, turning the future into the præter-tense. * Faith is the believers *Pasbath*, making things to come as certain to him, as if he did already enjoy them; and putteth a date upon the joys, of the life to come, before he is possessed of them. *Noah's* faith assured him of the flood, as certainly as if it had then been, when it was first (i) foretold; it is a *demonstration* of things not seen; faith seeth things that cannot be seen. That way of argumentation whereby error is confuted, by *Aristotle* is called *ἔλεγχος*, * the word here used. But here for a certain conviction assailing from divine authority, shewing us such things which sense cannot perceive and reason cannot comprehend. When faith thus represents these glorious things to come thus unto the believing soul, then there is *πείθισις*, a good persuasion of the heart, or a holy confidence; and from this persuasion there ariseth *παρρησία*, an humble boldness, or liberty, and freedom of speech to God in prayer, which *de jure* all believers have; these words you have together, in Eph. 2. 12. *In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence, by the faith of him.* And from these resulteth that desirable *πληροφρογία*, a full assurance of a future enjoyment, of those things that faith presents unto us, and we are persuaded of our title to, and with liberty, freedom, and enlargement of soul have prayed unto God for. So the Question is not concerning all men, but believers, and not whether all believers have it, but may have it; not by revelation, but by ordinary means; not whether they always keep it; nor about perfect, but certain infallible assurance in these words: thus,

The question stated.

1 Arg. from special grace.

A believer may without extraordinary Revelation, certainly know and be infallibly assured of eternal life.

And this will be made evident by the proof of these two propositions.

1. That

1. That a believer without extraordinary revelation, might certainly know that he hath justifying faith and unfeigned love to Christ, and that he is upright and sincere with God.

2 That there is an infallible connexion, between these special graces, and future glory. *That a man may certainly know his sincerity, faith, and love, is evidenced by these Particulars.*

1. God hath laid down in his word certain infallible *γνῶσιμα*, Characters, Signs, Discoveries, of sincerity, Justifying faith, and Unfeigned love to God, besides other topical heads, we may know it from the effects which it doth always produce; that where I see such an effect of faith, I know there is faith: And Papists must make us cast away all Logick, if we shall not have this granted. I see the broad clear light shining in mine eyes, therefore I know the Sun is risen; and when we see any sign, that is concomitant, or consequent, inseparable and proper to the thing of which it is a sign, we know that that thing is. A man that is sick and weak, yet feels his heart to leap and pant, he knows he is a living man, a man that discourseth, and rationally inferreth one thing from another, knoweth that he hath a reasonable soul, and that he is a man. There are as *certain Characters* in the word of God of sincerity, faith and love, as there are *plain injunctions* that we should be sincere, believe and love: Would God command a man to examine himself whether he be in the faith, if there were not rules suitable and sufficient, to direct us to know the nature of faith, and wherein it doth consist?

First proposition on which sheweth that a man might know he hath saving Grace. *Posito effectu inferre effectus propriam causam*

2. God hath given to a man, a power to understand, consider, deliberate, and reflect upon himself, and judge of himself and of his ways, herein a man is above a bruit; a beast likes his pasture, but cannot know his propriety. Certainly a man that is not a stranger to himself, but a diligent observer of the actings of his soul, might know what they are, yea, and discern the moral modifications of those acts. *For Conscience is privy to the principle, and spring of all our actings, to the manner and the end.* If I love a man, by reflecting upon my self, I know I love him, and shall this noble power of the soul be only useless, in the greatest concerns of my soul? Can I know what I approve, esteem most, and delight in most, and breath, and pant after most, in other things and not in this? it is true, conscience is naturally blind, in spiritual things, but yet directed by the word, and inlightned by the

ψυχὴ φασὶ λαμπρῆσαι, ὡς τὴν ἀληθεῖαν ὁρᾷ τὴν πάντων, καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ.

Antonin. L. 11. ff. 13. Edit. cant. 1691.

τὰ ἴδια τῆς λογικῆς ψυχῆς, ἐκωσὶν ὁρᾷ ἐκωσὶν διακρίνει, ἐκωσὶν ὁποῖαν αὐτὴ βάλῃται, ποιεῖ. Idem. L. 11. ff. 1.

Spirit, might pass a judgment upon a man: For as the Moon borroweth light from the Sun, & so communiceth light unto the world, which else it could not do: so conscience receiving light from the word, and spirit, discovereth what else it could not do. So it is called the candle of the Lord, *Prov. 20. 27. The spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly*: Not only taking notice of the outward acts in the life; but the inward motions of the heart, not only of some, but it hath a power to take cognizance of them all: Conscience is like the urine which discovereth whether a person be sound in health, or shews what his distemper is. By the Eccho, caused by the reflection of the sound, a man heareth his word after he hath spoken it: so by the reflecting power of conscience, a man views his actions after they are done, and hears his words after they be spoken. A man sees his spots or beauty in the glass, by the reflection of the species, that do represent them to his view. As *Joseph's* brethrens consciences told them that they were true men, and not (*1*) spies; so conscience may truly tell a man, that he is sincere, and not an hypocrite. Thus conscience is said to be a witness; *Rom. 9. 1. If say the truth in Christ, I lye not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost*; to accuse, and to excuse, *Rom. 2.*

* *rd ouveidōs* 15. So it is a judge, condemning or acquitting, according as a mans state is found to be. So much Heathens have spoken of conscience. *

καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν,
ἀποκρίσεις.
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν.

Hierocl. Com-
ment in Psal.

Carm.
Unfeigned will
ingn. is to part
with, and mort-
tise every sin,
a sure sign of
saving grace.

Now that the Scripture containeth Characters of sincerity, and that a man comparing himself by those Characters, might certainly know that he is sincere; will be evidenced by these Scriptures. *Psal. 19. 13. Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me: then mark [then] shall I be upright.* When there is no one known sin, but a man is really willing should be mortified and parted with, his most beloved sin that is nearest to him, which by way of propriety he may call his own, in an especial manner, which is the last sin a man parteth with; and if there be any sin which a man is unwilling to part with, and will keep a man off from Christ, it is his bosom sin, his darling; and the truth is, that if any man keep, love any one sin, which he will not let go, to close fully with Christ, let his profession be never so great, he is an hypocrite. Some men part with Christ for one lust, for one sin, *Luke 18. 22. When Jesus heard these things, how far he had gone, how much he had done, he said unto him, yet lackest thou one thing. Love to his riches, and prizing them more than Christ was his ruine; one stab at the heart*
with

with a Pen-knife, will as certainly kill a man, as a thousand wounds with a sword; one disease that is mortal, will as certainly bring a man to his grave, as twenty; and one leak in a ship will sink it, as more. Herod did many things, but yet he would not let go his *Herodias*, *Mark* 6. 17, 18, 19, 20. It is a sure rule, that which a man loves most, he will endeavour to keep longest, skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for his life. A man prizeth his right hand much, but his head more; and therefore to save his head, he will hold up his hand, and venture the loss of the one, to save the other. There may be many sins a man might love, but one especially, and he may be willing the one should be pared off to preserve that; but when he is willing to leave all, to indulge himself in none, no not his darling sin, it is a sign of sincerity. Consult these Scriptures, *Psalms* 17. 1, 3, 4. *Psalms* 119. 1, 2, 3, 6. *Job* 1. 8. and 2. 3, and 31. *cap.* throughout.

Now a man may by diligent enquiry find out his beloved sin, and he may know, and his Conscience may bear him witness of his willingness to part with this, to have it subdued, and that by the grace of God he doth keep himself from it, that it bears not rule, nor dominion in his soul; *Psalms* 18. 23. *I was also upright before him.* How doth David manifest this, by the observation of his heart, and wayes in this particular; for it followeth, *and I kept myself from mine iniquity.* There is as much power of God required, and strength of grace to make a man part with his beloved sin, as all the rest. Thus *Hezekiah* knew his sincerity, *Isa.* 38. 3. He had the testimony of his Conscience, and was sure of it, else how could he have made his appeal to God? *Remember now, oh Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.*

A man may know whether he be thus willing to part with sin.

Likewise that a man might certainly know he hath justifying Faith is proved from, *2 Cor.* 13. 5. *Examine your selves whether ye be in the Faith, prove your own selves: Know ye not your own selves, how that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates.* Doth God so strictly charge us to know that, which cannot be known? that Faith here spoken of that we must enquire after, is a justifying Faith, appears from the Text.

True Faith might be discovered in us.

1. By this Christ dwelleth in us, and so not by any other faith.
2. Because without this faith we are *ἀνομία* Reprobates, not as opposed to the Elect, but denoting persons unsound and hypocritical. It is also not a conjecture, but a certain knowledge that we are pre-

ferred

παραζητεσθε δοκιμαζετε. sed to obtain, by the word that the Holy Ghost useth, *search, make tryal*, as God tried *Abraham*, Gen. 22. 1. That his love to God, and fear of God appeared. Prove as the Gold-smith doth his Mettals in the Fire, or by the Touch stone; because he bids us prove it not so much by argument, as experience; for so the word is used, *Luke 14. 19.* He went to prove his Oxen: and forasmuch as we must prove our selves to be in Christ, we must not leave it uncertain; *for what is uncertain after tryal, is not proved.*

A note of true faith.

Τιμή for ἔντι-

μη.

πιστας, in Lot.

Besides that we do believe, we might know by the *judgments valuing, the wills chusing, and the affections loving Christ above all*, 1 Pet. 2. 7. *To you that believe he is precious*; Christ is an honour to the Believer, and Christ is most prized and valued by the Believer: And cannot a man know what he prizeth most? What he valueth and esteemeth most? what his understanding doth dictate to him, to be chosen above all? and whether his will doth chuse according to the dictates of the understanding? and the affections, love, and desire, are upon the wing to enjoy what the will doth make choice of? and grief filleth the heart when he cannot obtain it? Could not *Ahab* know that he prized *Naboths Vineyard*, when he grieved because he could not get it? and all that he had was lessened, by the want of what he prized so much? So doth the soul cry out, Riches is nothing without Christ, and Honour and Friends cannot remove the grief of his heart, till Christ comes in to his heart, and manifests himself there; cannot he know it, by his care to get, by his fear to lose, by his determining what to do, in case he must lose that which he prizeth most, or all other things besides? he will part withal, though very desirable, as a Marriner will cast away his richest Goods in a Tempest, to save his life; * which think you doth he prize most? A woman if her house be on fire, suffers all her Pewter to be consumed in the flames, so that she may but save her child, is it not apparent which she valueth most? All shall go that thou mayest keep Christ, if thou prize him most. This is known by the delight of the heart in the enjoyment of that which a man valueth most in the want of other things; thou canst delight in Christ, in poverty, affliction, in the midst of troubles in the world.

* As *Aristippus* cast his gold into the Sea, saying, *satius est, ut, hac per Aristippum, quam propter hac pereat Aristippus*, i.e. it is better, these things perish by *Aristippus*, than *Aristippus* by the e. things.

So likewise for love; is it not possible for a man to know that he loveth Christ above all? how else could *Peter* when asked three times by Christ, whether he loved him, answer three times, that he did love him, and did appeal to Christ that knew his heart, that he spake truly, because he knew he loved him sincerely, and this is observa-

observable that this was after *Peters* fall, by which he had learned to have a holy jealousy over his own heart, and Christ doth not intimate any deceitfulness in his heart in this, as he did before when he said (m) *Mat. 16. 39.* twice that he would not deny him.

By the effects of love, we may certainly know that we love him. *33. Sign of true lov. to God.*

1. By thy unfeigned desires to be like unto him, we love to imitate those whom we dearly love; love produceth assimilation, if he be holy so wouldst thou be, if he hate sin so dost thou.

2. By thy hearty desire to be united to him, to have him with thee, * his presence thou dost desire, his absence thou canst not bear without mourning and complaints, and wishing, oh that I could see him: oh that I could meet with him: and therefore thou goest from duty to duty, from ordinance to ordinance, from thy prayers in thy Closet to the Congregation, if thou mightest find him there, from the Word to the Sacrament, if thou mightest find him there, if he come unto thee thou rejoicest, if he withdraw himself thy soul is troubled. ** Nil magis gregale quam amor, omnium rerum patientissimus, nisi societate, societas gaudet & exorquet consortium. Hieronim. De avi. Vo. p. 333.*

3. By thy great care to please him, fear to offend him, and * resigning thyself to him. When it grieveth thy heart to grieve thy Lord, and it breaks thy heart when thou breakest his Commands, ** Se a se auferit amari, & amato tradit.* John 14. 15. If ye love me keep my Commandments, verse 21. He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, — 1 John 2. cap. 3. And hereby we know that we know (including this affection of love unto) him, verse 4. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him, verse 5. But who so keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: Hereby we [know] that we are in him, 1 John 5. 3. For this is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous, because of the love we have to him that doth command.

4. By the love that we bear unto his image, in whomsoever we do see it, and love them that are like to Christ, so much that we could deny our selves of honours, and profits, were it necessary, and God should call us to it, to do them good; as we love Christ above all, so we love his likeness in others, and the believer for Christs sake above outward things, that if he be in necessity we do not only wish him well, but part with something, and if God & the Law of nature did not require us to lay it out; first for necessary provision for our families, could part with all to help them in their great *Aur eccles. The soul that loves God, do he echo to Gods Commands. Ps. 27 8. When thou saidst — my heart said: —*

(n. necessity.

11 Act. 4. 33, 34. (u) necessity. Now this sincere love to the people of God, is an Evidence of the goodness of our spiritual condition, 1 John 3. 14.

1 John 3. 16, 17. *We know that we have passed from death to life. How, not by extraordinary revelation, but by this rational argumentation, because we love the Brethren? and verse 18. My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And verse 19. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.*

But here the Papists doth not only cavil, but the drooping distressed Christian also questioneth all this, because of the deceitfulness of the heart. Alas the Scripture tells us, that the heart of man is desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things, (o) who can know it? And if the heart of man cannot be known, how can we say, we believe, or love God? For this consider these four things.

From Jer. 17. 9. The Papists cavils, the drooping Christian doubts.

1. Another man cannot know it; I cannot certainly and infallibly know whether another man be sincere, or what his heart is; for it is the prerogative and excellency of God to be *ἀποκρυφῶς* one that knows the hearts of all men, *Acts 1. 24.*

2. A wicked mans heart is so wicked, and there is such a depth of wickedness in his heart, that he cannot come to the bottom of it.

3. If a man cannot know all the secret turnings, and windings of his heart, yet he may know the general scope, and frame of his heart.

4. If he could not do this of himself, yet assisted by the spirit of God, which all believers have received, he might know the frame, bent, scope, inclination of his own heart.

Thus far the first proposition, that a man may know that he hath sincere faith in Christ, and love to God. Now we proceed to the second.

2 Proposition, which shews the connexion between grace and glory.

Second proposition is this; *That there is an infallible connexion between justifying faith, unfeigned love, and eternal glory.*

The Apostle tells us of some things that may be called *ἑχόμενα σωτηρίας*, Heb. 6. 9. *things that accompany salvation.* Having, or containing salvation, that are contiguous to salvation, that the one toucheth the other, this must be proved; for else though I know I do believe and love God sincerely to day, I can have no infallible assurance of salvation, because this may be lost before to morrow, or before I dye. Now this I shall endeavour to prove by these three following particulars.

1 From the verity of Gods promises.

1. *The undoubted verity of Gods promises, proveth an inseparable connexion.*

connexion between sincere Grace and eternal Glory. Faith is the eye of the soul, and with it, through a promise, as through a Prospective glass, can the soul have a view of heaven and glory. What greater certainty or security can a man have, than the infallible promise of that God who is truth it self, who will not deny his Word, but the same Love and free Grace that moved him to infuse Grace into thy heart, and to make the promise, will move him also to give the thing promised, *John 3. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life, John 5. 24. He that believeth hath everlasting life: He hath it in the Promise, he hath it in the first-fruits, Rom. 8. 23. — But we our selves also which have the first fruits of the spirit. — The Jews by offering their first fruits, did testify their thankfulness to God for what they had received, and hopes of the full crop in due time. He hath everlasting life, then it must not end, Mark 16. 16. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: He that believeth not, shall be damned. As certainly as the unbeliever shall be cast into utter darkness, so certainly shall the believer be partaker of the glorious inheritance of the Saints in Light. The Promise is as true as the Threatning, Acts 16. 30, 31. There you see a poor convinced, wounded sinner, under the load of guilt, that had a sight of his lost, undone, deplorable condition, coming to the Apostles, and speaking after this manner, *Ye men of God, ye Servants of the Lord, if there be any way for me, who have been so great a sinner, that have done enough ten thousand times over, to damn my own soul; if there be any certain way to avoid Damnation, I beseech you tell me, if there be any means by which I might certainly be saved, as you pity my sinful soul, my bleeding heart, my wounded conscience, tell me what it is, declare it to me. What is the Apostles answer? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. The Apostle speaks not doubtingly, perhaps thou shalt be saved, perhaps thou mayest be damned. If thou get Faith it may be thou mayest get Heaven. Alas! what relief, peace, satisfaction would this have been to his wounded Conscience? But they speak peremptorily, Believe and thou shalt be saved. So that prove thou, that thou hast Faith, and these Scriptures prove thou shalt have salvation.**

The Connexion therefore will not be questioned, if I believe I shall be saved; this God hath promised, but shall not a believer lose his Faith in Christ, and lose his Love to God; for the Remonstrants grant that a believer *qua talis*, as a believer cannot fall away, nor come short of glory; but *qui talis est*; He that is a believer may fall

away totally and finally, and so cannot have assurance of salvation, because he hath no assurance that he shall persevere in his believing and state of Grace. To this I oppose these places of Scripture, 1 Thes. 5. 23, 24. *And the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless, (therefore preserved from Apostacy, which is exceedingly blame-worthy) till when; till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; is this a prayer, and not a promise? Yea, it is a prayer indited by the spirit of God, and hath a promise following it, if you will read on. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.* Here the Apostle that had the spirit, prayeth for perseverance; and the Apostle that had the spirit, promiseth perseverance. Certainty then of perseverance doth not make men careless in the use of means, nor prayers needless; by praying a man obtains the thing promised, and the certainty that he hath by the promise of obtaining, puts life into his prayers, Phil. 1. 6. *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until he cometh, will finish it, will perfect it, until the day of Jesus Christ,* 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Kept (garrisoned) by the power of God through faith unto salvation,* John 10. 28, 30. 1 Cor. 10. 13. — *But will with the temptation make away to escape; therefore they shall persevere, for to enable the believer to persevere in all tentations, is to make a way to escape the destruction and hurt the temptation tendeth to. God doth promise this absolutely,* Jer. 32. 38, 40. *And they shall be my people, and I will be their God, and will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good, but I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. They shall not forsake God, because God will not leave them,* Ezek. 36. 27. *And I will put my Spirit into you, and [cause] you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements, and do them.* As absolute as was the Covenant with Noah, that he would not drown the world, Isa. 54. 9, 10. Besides, as God doth make conditional promises of pardon and salvation to those that believe and repent, so he doth promise to give the condition, Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27. And herein is one special difference betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace; for God promised happiness to man under the Covenant of works, if he persevered in yielding perfect obedience, but did not promise to keep him from departing from him. So that a conditional promise is sufficient security, where the condition is certain, and doth not infer the uncertainty of the promise, but where the condition is doubtful. These places also prove

φρσπεμίνος.
φρσπεμίνος
denoteth more
safety than
φρσπεμίνος

prove the constancy of Grace, that it shall not be lost, 1 John 3.9. *Who- quæct lav*
fover is born of God, doth not commit sin; doth not make a trade of sin, *non est differt*
 cannot sin so; as by sin totally and finally to fall, *for his seed remaineth in ab æta æta-*
him. Whilst the Papist and Arminians have endeavoured to bite a- *vers. Simpli-*
 sunder the Golden chain, whereby Grace and Glory are linked toge- *ther acceptio.*
 ther, *This place of Scripture* hath broke their teeth, *Bellarmino* acknow- *Bellar. Tom. 4.*
 ledgeth; that this is the hardest place of Scripture for him to answer, *in de Just. lib. 3.*
 all the Book of God, *Job 4. 14.* It is set forth by a well of water spring- *cap. 15.*
 ing up to everlasting life. A believer is born of incorruptible seed,
 1 Pet. 1. 23. An hypocrite, like a stake, hath no root, and therefore may
 be plucked up, but a real believer hath grace rooted in him, and there-
 fore like a tree rooted in the earth stands fast.

If it be objected, no man can certainly be assured of salvation, be-
 cause God hath no where made a particular promise to any person, by
 name, and nothing is to be believed with a Divine faith, but what is,
 exprelly contained in the Word of God. He hath not said, *Thou*
Cornelius shalt be saved.

To this is answered, *That all particulars are contained under the*
Universals. If all men be rational creatures, and *Coryelius* be a man,
 we must conclude that *Cornelius* is a rational creature. How will they
 prove that there is an infallible certainty, that every particular person
 shall come to judgement. For God hath not said, and thou *Cornelius*
shalt come to judgement. In the commands that are given to all men,
 that they shall not commit Adultery. How will they prove that this
 reaches every particular man; for where hath God said, *Thou Cornelius*
shalt not commit Adultery? Thus this is proved from the infallibility
 of Gods promises.

Secondly, *The prevalency of Christs intercession for those that do be-* 2. From the
lieve and love God, doth demonstrate the inseparable connexion between prevalency of
Grace and Glory. For we know, that what Christ prayeth for shall be *Christs prayers.*
 granted, *John 11. 42.* And I know that thou bearest me alwaies.
 * *Arminius* layeth it down as a certain truth, that Christs prayers are * *Certo certum*
 never rejected. Now Christs prayers for believers are not conditional, *concludere nobis*
 Father, if their Faith fail not, let them be saved, but Christ prayeth, *licet, Christi*
 that their Faith might not fail, and that they may be saved. Christs In- *preces nunquam*
 tercession doth not exclude the conditions of Faith and Perseverance, *rejectionem tri.*
 but is, that we may believe, persevere, and so intallibly be saved, *Amis. o. et. de*
Luke 22. 32. I have prayed that thy Faith fail not. And *Arminians* *sacer. Christi*
 grant this prayer of Christ to be absolute, praying not for *P. 17.*
 Peters sal-
 vation, if he should persevere, but praying that he may persevere.

Neither is this prayer peculiar for Peter, excluding the rest; for though he mentioneth Peter yet he speaketh to all, and of them all, *Simon, Simon*, Satan hath desired you, that he may sift you as wheat; and when he should be recovered from his fall, he should strengthen his Brethren; whereby it is manifest, that Christ had respect unto the perseverance of the rest, as well as to *Peters*: And the like intercession Christ makes for all that should believe, as appeareth from the 17th. of *John*, which was not a prayer onely suitable to the condition, and cases, and exigencies of the Apostles at that time, but a pattern of his interceding now in Heaven. So much *Arminius* grants, *John* 17. 15. *I pray that thou wouldest keep them from evil*; therefore from Apostacy the greatest evil. Not that they should be free from persecution, but from being overcome by persecution, that it may not separate them from him: & to T8 novus; the Article shews the evil to be specially Sin and Satan, verse 20. *Neither pray I for these alone: but for them also which shall believe on me through their word*; And he prayeth for their glorification, verse 24. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am.* (Christ then, as to his Divine nature, was in Heaven, a proof that he was God) *That they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.*

Cont. n. illud caput 17. Joh. perpetuum canonem peccum & intercessionis, quas Christus potius offert in Cæli quamquam enim Christus adhuc in terra existens illam precationem recitaveris, tamen ad statum illius sublimem in Cælis pertinet proprie, & describi valuit, ut perpetuo nobis esset in terra solatio. Armin. orat. de Sacerd. Christi. pag 17.

3. From the inability of all things to separate betwixt Christ and a Believer.

Thirdly, *The inability of all things that may set themselves to make a breach and separation between God and the gracious soul, doth demonstrate an inseparable connexion between grace and glory.* Famous is that place to this purpose, in *Rom.* 8. 35. 37. 38. Where the question is propounded by the Apostle, whether any thing shall separate betwixt God and his people and hinder their salvation? And the Apostle saith No, where observe these particulars.

First, The Interrogation; Who shall separate? That is, none shall.

Interrogatio neg. gaudet. For thus an Interrogation is a strong Negation. p.

Mat 23. 33. Heb. 2. 3. Secondly, Here is a particular application of this, to individual persons; not only Believers, or Elect in general. Who shall separate [us?]

Thirdly, A particular enumeration of those evils that might threaten this separation, tribulation, persecution, &c. And whereas some assert their own wills may be the cause of their Apostacy, and that not mentioned in the Text. It is not said their own wills shall not separate them. Answer, it is included, when it is said, no other creature, except they will exempt mens will from the creation,

Fourth.

Fourthly, His glorying and triumphing over all these, *νικῶν πάντας*, more than Conquerours. *Over-override.*

Fifthly, In whose strength it is that we are enabled to keep our steadfastness, that maketh it the more certain, in the strength of Christ, and not our own.

Sixthly, His confidence, and he had the Spirit of God, *πιστεύων*, I am persuaded, though sometimes it signifies no more than a moral persuasion, or probable conjecture, yet it doth not exclude a certainty of knowledge, Rom. 14. 14. *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus Christ, that there is nothing unclean of itself*; That is, I certainly know, it must therefore be judged by the circumstances of the Text.

Seventhly, It is not said only, *they shall not separate*, but that they cannot separate us from the love of God; whether love be taken actively or passively, for the love wherewith we love God, or the love wherewith we are beloved by God, is not now material; it is true of both. The sum of this might be gathered up in this Syllogism. Those that may certainly know, that they do sincerely believe, and love God, may certainly know that they shall be saved; but a real believer may certainly know that he doth sincerely believe and love God; therefore he may certainly know that he shall be saved.

Thus far of the first Argument from our Graces, and the infallible connexion between them and glory, because I may be judged to be too long in this, I will be shorter in the rest, that I may come to the second part of the Question.

2. *A Believer may know that he shall be saved, because he may know he hath the spirit of God dwelling in him.* The in-dwelling of the spirit is proper and peculiar to believers; for the world cannot receive him, John 14. 17. That they have the spirit, they may know by the special effects which he produceth in that heart where he dwells, by his convincing, humbling, sanctifying work, 1 Cor. 6. 11. By inabling them to make progress in their sanctification, 2 Cor. 3. 18. By his special assistance vouchsafed to them in holy prayer, which sighs and groans with cannot be uttered, Rom. 8. 26, 27. By inabling them to mortifie their sin more and more, Rom 8. 13.

Now by all these effects, the in-dwelling of the spirit of God in the heart of a Believer being manifested, it doth assure him of three things.

First, By the inhabitation of the spirit, he may know his eternal Election, 2 Thes. 2. 13. *Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit.*

Secondly,

Secondly, By this we may be sure of our Adoption, Gal. 4. 6. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father.

Thirdly, By the spirit dwelling in us, we may be sure of Eternal salvation, Ephes. 1. 13-14. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. In which Text there are two Words that are to be considered; the Spirit is a seal, it is an earnest; a seal among men, is,

ισφραγισθη-
τε, ἀρραβών.

1. For Secrecy. 2. For Distinction. 3. For Authority. 4. For Certainty. A writing sealed is authentick, and for ensuring. It is an earnest,

to also called, 2 Cor. 1. 22. a Metaphor taken from buyers and sellers.

An earnest among men, is part of payment, and though it be but small, yet it is sufficient to secure you of that which is of very great value. Though there be no commutative Justice betwixt God and the Creature, yet here it hath its weight. There is this difference betwixt an earnest and a pawn; A pawn might be fetcht from his hands to whom it was committed to keep, but an earnest binds a man to stand to his agreement, or at least he must lose his earnest: But God will give the whole inheritance, and will not lose his earnest. For our greater com-

ἀρραβών,
Peculiariter di-
citur pars al-
qua per soluta
pretii in vendi-
tione interve-
nientis; ut fides
sit reliqua per
servandæ fidei
ma. Beza.

3 Argument
from instances,
ab esse ad posse
valet conse-
quentia.

fort we may take notice of these particulars in this Text, and the 2 Cor. 1. 21, 22. compared together. 1. The person sealing, the Father.

2. In whom, in Christ. 3. With what seal, the spirit of Promise, where are all the persons in the Trinity making us sure of our inheritance.

4. When, after ye believed. 5. The end, subordinate, the certainty of our salvation, a seal, an earnest; ultimate, the praise of his glory. 6.

How long this seal and earnest shall thus assure us, and that is, till we have the compleat possession of what it is an earnest.

3. Many have without extraordinary revelation obtained a certain knowledge, that they should be saved; Therefore it is possible: That which hath been done, is not impossible, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course; henceforth there is a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge will give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing. This certainty the Apostle gathers from his sincerity and constancy in his Obedience and Faith, and declareth the same certainty that all those have, that know they love his appearing, Heb. 10. 34. Knowing in your selves, that ye have in Heaven a better and enduring substance. Par parium sit ratio, & par affirmatio.

4. God

4. God commands us to make our calling and election sure, therefore it is possible; Gods commands are not evidences of our ability, but yet are of the possibility of the duty that he commands; they do not tell us what we by our own strength can do, but yet they declare what by our diligence and Gods assistance may be done, 2 Pet. 1. 10. And if we can make our election sure (not in it self, for so it is, 2 Tim. 2. 19. but to our selves) we may be sure of salvation, Rom. 8. 30. Whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

4. Argument:
Nemo tenetur
ad impossibile.

5. The Papists grant a certainty of hope, therefore we may have a certainty of Faith; for by Faith we must first apprehend the object, before we can hope for it, and according to the measure, degrees, and strength of our Faith, is our hope; he that hath but a weak faith, cannot have a strong hope. If Abraham had staggered in his faith, he had not been steadfast in his hope. Rom. 15. 13. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, in believing that you may abound in hope. So much for the possibility of this assurance.

5 Argument:
πληροφρονε
τες ἐν πίστει
Ἡβ. 6. 11.
sup. οὐκ ἐστι,
πληροφρονε
αντες πιστε
ας.

Now I come to the second part of the question, to speak to those that know not, that they have eternal life, and discern not their spiritual condition, and those may be of two sorts.

Ἡβ. 10. 12.
Second part of
the Case.

1. Some that for want of diligence in the use of means, are uncertain what their condition is.

2. Such as have made enquiry, and long earnestly to be resolved in this great Question, whether they be Converted, Changed, and shall be saved, or no, and yet cannot find it out. I would speak a few things to the first of these, because the greatest part know not their condition, through their own carelessness and negligence, that through the selfishness of their own hearts, or the difficulty of the work, or multiplicity of worldly care and business, are yet in the dark. That examine their Shop book oftner, and more diligently than they do the book of their own hearts; that make oftner enquiry whether they grow rich, than whether they wax good. If I may judge of other mens hearts by mine own, in this point, and not be thought to have too hard, and uncharitable thoughts of them, I would conclude we are all guilty of negligence in this case, and therefore walk in the dark, and remain in uncertainties about the salvation of our immortal souls, which should be the first thing we should make sure of, because it is of the greatest and everlasting concernment. Ah Christian? chide thy own sloathful, lazie, negligent heart; shame thy self out of this

care-

carelessness; what, canst thou eat, and drink, and sleep, and trade as quietly as if thou wert past all danger? And yet thou dost not know whether thou shalt be damned, or saved. Awake, oh my soul! Rouse up thy self, and look after thine eternal state; it is no matter whether thou art rich or poor, honourable or contemptible, the great question, that with the greatest seriousness is to be resolved, is whether thou hast grace or no, whether Christ be thine or no; certainly careless persons should be stirred up to look after their eternal state, and those that are diligent need some considerations to make them more diligent, and therefore the Apostle *Peter* writeth to those that had obtained like precious faith with himself, calling upon them, urging and exhorting them to make their calling and election sure, *2 Pet. 1. 10.* For this end let me propound these following questions to thee that art negligent in this great concernment, and as thou readest, give thy self a sober serious answer.

Questions
propounded to
slothful
Christians

1. Is it nothing to thee, to live in the daily neglect of a commanded duty; is it not the injunction of thy Lord, whose servant thou dost profess thy self to be, that thou shouldest give all diligence in this matter, and wilt thou not give any at all; or not at all proportionable to the weightiness of thy concernment herein? might not this raise doubts and jealousies in thy soul, that thy condition is not good because thou art not diligent to know, and to prove it to be good? especially when thou dost consider that thy Lord commands thy diligence herein: Mightest not thou question the sincerity of thy obedience to any of Gods commands, for want of the universality of it, extending it self to all Gods commands? Tell me Christian, why hath God given us this charge? Read *2 Pet. 1. 10.* Wherefore, the rather Brethren give all diligence to make your calling and election sure; is it not the same God that commands thee to pray, that command thee to make sure of Heaven? didst thou never read these words; or hast thou read them, and thrown them by, and thought this counsel is not fit to be followed, nor this command to be obeyed? What canst thou say for thy neglect? Look a little into the Text, what is it that you are commanded to make sure of; House or Land? If it had been so, it is like thou wouldest have obeyed; but it is something better, infinitely better, whether thou art effectually called, and eternally elected; and is this to be done slothfully, carelessly; or dost not God require thy diligence, thy utmost diligence, nay all thy diligence, nay thy speedy diligence without delay, thy painful diligence without indulging thy self in thy sloth, thy continual diligence without

weari-

weariness, or wilt thou hadst got a certainty of thy state? and shouldst thou not do this, rather than any temporal concernment? shouldst thou not make sure of Grace, rather than of riches; of Heaven, rather than the earth; in an interest of God, rather than of earthly possessions?

2. Is it not a shame that wicked men should daily use more care to make sure of fading vanities, than thou dost to make sure of better *Operose nihil* and more lasting riches? what, is not the soul better than the body? *egens*, or are things temporal better worth than things Eternal? how do they cark and care, what must we eat, & what must we drink; and how shall we be sure of something to keep us when we are old? dost thou do thus for thy soul, how shall I get my sins pardoned, my nature sanctified, and my soul saved? how shall I be sure of an eternal heavenly house above, when this mouldring cottage of my body is tumbled down? doth it not shame thee to see the diligence of worldly men, that if they buy house, or land, they look narrowly to the writing, and ask advice and counsel, whether the Title will be good, that he may be sure, and not defrauded? The old miser will not let forth his monies, but he will have good sufficient security, both for principal and interest, because he saith and knows it is good to be sure; nay, yet farther, doth it not shame thee that many men should take more pains for Hell, than thou dost for Heaven, and to be sure of damnation, than thou dost to be certain of thy salvation? how do they daily dudge in the ways of wickedness, committing sin with greediness with both hands heartily, with their whole soul, as though they should not come to Hell sure enough, or soon enough; while thou art dull, flat, listless in thy duties to God, and not praying heartily as for thy soul? Do not wicked men take more pains in breaking the Sabbath, than thou dost in keeping of it; and do not they scorn duties, more than thou dost prize and practise them? But further,

3. Dost thou not too much forget thine own Mortality? dost thou indeed consider that thou art hasting into an Eternal state; and must within these few years, months, yea weeks, enter into an unchangeable condition? dost thou indeed believe Heaven or Hell is best for thee? that eternal death, or eternal life, are at the end of this fading, short, momentary life? or dost thou judge it to be no different, whether it be the place of thy everlasting abode? what is the matter? Good Lord! what sloth, stupidity, negligence, hath possessed our hearts! surely, if thou didst believe that thou mightest be in thy Grave to morrow, wouldst thou not make sure of Heaven to day?

day? If the lease of thy house be almost expired; and the Landlord hath given thee warning to provide thee another habitation, for he will not suffer thee to renew it any more, dost thou not presently enquire of thy friends, and of thy neighbours? Sirs, can you tell me where I may have a convenient dwelling, I have but a little time in the house where I am, and I have had warning to go out by such a day? Art thou not careful to have an house ready to go to upon the very same day thou leavest the former? Alas! dost thou not know the lease of thy life is almost out? Nay, dost thou not know that thou art only a Tenant at will, and God may turn thee out at an hours, at a moments warning? and yet dost thou not make sure of an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens? hath not God given thee warning? did thy head never ache? was thy heart never sick? surely if thou didst not forget thy own mortality, thou wouldst be more careful, painful, diligent in thy business. I see frequently men upon their sick-beds, when they think they must dye, begin to inquire after heaven, and how they may know their sins are pardoned, and whether their souls shall be saved, because the apprehension of the secrets of the grave doth rouse them; and for all thou knowest, thou, though now in health, mayest be as soon in thy grave, as he that lyeth sick. God can stop thy breath when he pleaseth. Art thou mortal? look then after thy soul.

Is not this too great a sleighting of the comforts of the spirit? of God & of Christ and his promises? is there not so much excellency in all this, and sweetness in discerning thy propriety to them, as to provoke thee to diligence, in making sure of them?

Dost thou not know that others have looked long after it, and dost thou think thou shalt come so easily to it? others have prayed much, and searched themselves often, and yet have not been able to satisfy all their own doubts, whether they have gone farther than ever any Hypocrite went; and dost thou think it will be so easily discerned, whether thy heart be sincere with God? many find it a hard thing to distinguish betwixt the highest degrees of common grace in Hypocrites, and the lowest degrees of saving grace in a true Believer.

Dost thou think that Conscience will never be awakened to diligence, when thou canst not satisfy it about thy salvation? will it always be in this spiritual slumber? dost thou think that sickness will never come? and that death will never come? and that trouble will never seize upon thee? when thy conscience shall be so alarmed, that thou wouldst give all thou art worth to know what shall become of thy

thy soul? oh then for an infallible evidence of Gods love! oh then that thou mightst know whether God will pardon thy sin and save thy soul! oh dreadful case! when thou comest to dye, and Conscience shall accuse thee for thy sloath, when thou feelest thy spirit begin to fail, and apprehendest thy self near the grave, and Conscience rageth, and is not at peace, because thou dost not know whether thou shalt go, to Heaven or Hell! It is dreadful, doleful, sad, to hear these complaints from a dying man: oh woe is me, that I must take my farewell of all my friends, and death is impatient of delay, and yet I cannot say my sins are pardoned! oh woe is me, though I live a dying, I cannot say my sins are pardoned! within a little while my body must be carried from my Bed to my Grave; but oh it breaks my heart that I cannot tell whether my soul, my precious (and yet too much neglected) soul shall be carried to Heaven by holy Angels? or dragged down to Hell by cursed Devils! oh that God would grant me a month or two, a little longer, that I may work out my salvation! But thy Conscience shall tell thee, thou hadst time, but thou didst mispend it; thou hadst it, but thou didst not improve it in getting this grand question resolved, Whether thou hadst made thy peace with God. Consider now how dreadful it will be, when Conscience is awakened, and thou in this case unresolved.

7. If thou be a true Christian, yet herein dost thou not act too much like the careless ungodly World? they take no care to make sure of Heaven, and wilt thou justify their practice, and harden them in it? There are some carnal ones in the family; a carnal husband, or a carnal wife, or ungodly children, or graceless servants, that minds not God, nor care for their souls, that look not after Heaven; and wilt thou be guilty of encouraging them in their carelessness, and hardening them in their forgetfulness of God, by thine own remissness? but if thou wast serious in the use of means, pressing, following hard after God, thy strictness might shame them out of their wickedness, and might reflect upon themselves, if such a one that was so circumspectly, and taketh so much pains in duties, and yet doubteth, and fears, and would fain be resolved; what a careless wretch am I, never to regard my own soul; they are ignorant of God, and his excellency; of Christ, and his beauty; of Grace, and its necessity; and therefore desire them not, nor care to make sure of them; but God hath opened thine Eyes, to see all these. Stir up thy self then to get a certainty of thine interest in them.

8. Art thou not too much guilty of Hypocrisie, when thou goest to

the Table of the Lord, and yet dost not give diligence to make thy calling and election sure; nor to have the certain knowledge of the pardon of thy sin, and of thy peace with God? is not the Lords Supper an ordinance for the helping the sight-receivers to assurance of the pardon of their sin, in the blood of Christ? is it not for that end, why then dost thou look after it no more, when thou returnest from that Ordinance?

Having premised these things to awaken you, and rouse you out of your sloath, supposing that now you are resolved to take any course that can be prescribed from the Word of God. That thou art one, who weepst, mournest, complainest because thou dost not discern thy spiritual condition, I shall lay down my advice to thee in these following Directions.

Directions to
get assurance.

Direction 1. Get some Characteristical distinguishing signs of true saving Grace; by thy serious searching the Word of God. God hath told thee in his Word who shall be damned, and who shall be saved; though not by name, yet by the qualifications, by which they are described. In the Bible there are the Statute Laws of Heaven, and the standing Rule by which thou must be tryed, thou must stand or fall, be eternally blessed, or everlastingly miserable; as thy condition is consonant to, or various from the infallible Characters of saving Grace contained in the Scripture. Thou that hast deserved eternal death mightest know before the day of the general Assize whether thou shalt be acquitted or condemned.

But if thou know not how to gather these thy self, go to some godly learned Minister, and desire him to give thee some Characters of a sincere Christian from the Word of God, wherein hypocrisie and sincerity are differenced, and be sure the signs thou tryest thy self by, be not short of saving grace, or that will not hold tryal, or bear thee out at the day of judgment. I cannot here insert any, partly because I have not room to crowd them in, partly because by what I have already laid down under that head, that a man might know that he is sincere, believeth and loveth Gods something to this purpose might be picked up.

Direction 2. When thou hast thus furnished thy self, thy next work must be to set thy Conscience on work, and reflect upon thy own heart, and upon the motions of thy will, and compare thy self with the Word of God. The former

mer sent you to study the book of Gods Word; this calleth upon you to study the book of your own hearts. The other is a direct act of the understanding, this is a reflect act to make a judgement of thy state; whether there be a Transcript of those things in thine own heart: for every Believer hath the Gospel-laws written upon the table of his soul by the spirit of God. Assurance cannot be had ordinarily, without the examination of our own Hearts, for assurance is the certain knowledge of the conclusion; drawn from the premises, one out of the Scripture, the other by the reflect act of the understanding, or Conscience, thus: He that believeth and is justified, shall be saved; that is the Word of God: Then by the search of his own heart, he must be able to say; But I believe and am justified, and from these two, doth result this assurance that he may conclude: therefore I shall be saved.

Luke 15. 8. The woman that had lost a piece of silver, did light a Candle, and swept her house, and thereby found what she had lost. Conscience is this Candle, the Scripture is the fire at which it must be lighted, and self-examination is the broom whereby the heart is swept, and so the state of the soul which before was not discerned, comes to be discovered.

But here take heed thy heart be not rash in affirming or denying, suspend the determination till thou hast made a narrow, strict inquiry into thy soul, as thou lovest thy soul do not presume, as thou valuest thy comfort do not deny any work of the spirit of God upon thy heart, but with thankfulness acknowledg any thing that thou canst discern to be a fruit of the spirit. *Search thoroughly, and judge impartially.* Say therefore to thy soul; to make thy self more serious in this weighty

work thou art now, oh my soul, in the presence of the great Heart-*Deus est oculus inquisitor.*

searching God, that knoweth certainly what thy state and condition is, what thy will, heart, and affections are: thou must, oh my soul! shortly stand at the Bar of God; as now thou standest at the bar of conscience, and must be searched, judged by the Lord; and have the sentence of Life or Death, of absolution or condemnation, according as thy state shall be found to be. Consider, oh my soul, thou art now about the greatest concernment in the world, many have been mistaken, many are now tormented in hell, that once thought their condition was good, it is not therefore thee to flatter thy self, and it is easie to be mistaken, and if thou shouldst be mistaken, it is as much as thy soul is worth, if thy condition be bad, and thou conclude it to be good, thou wilt but go more merrily to Hell: It is as much as thy comfort is worth, if thy condition be good, and thou con-

conclude it to be bad; thou wilt go more sadly to Heaven, and wilt be unthankful to thy God, and keep the glory from him, and the comfort from thy self. Thou art indicted, oh my soul, arraigned and found guilty, that thou hast sinned against the Lord, the question is, Whether thou hast repented, and art pardoned? I charge thee therefore, oh my soul! that thou speak truly, and answer rightly to these demands.

Art thou so far convinced of sin, of the vileness of its own Nature, the evil in it, the evil after it, that thou art weary of it, thou groanest under it, thou loathest it, and art unfeignedly willing to be broken from every sin, without any reserve? and what thou canst not extirpate, that thou wilt bewail? Art thou so far convinced of thine own insufficiency to help thy self, that all thy tears cannot wash thee, and make thee clean, all thy duties cannot save thee, that though thou darest not neglect them as means, yet thou darest not rely upon them as a Saviour; so that thou seeest the necessity of a Christ; the suitableness of Christ? the sufficiency and willingness of Christ, offering himself unto thee in the Gospel, calling to thee, crying after thee, saying, ah thou poor, miserable, forlorn sinner, thou hast undone thy self, wilt thou now be cured? thou hast wounded thy self, wilt thou let me apply a plaster of my blood, my healing, pacifying blood, to thy bleeding soul, to thy distressed, disquieted Conscience? all that I expect from thee, is to take me for thy Lord and Husband, to rule govern, sanctifie, and save thee, thou hast withstood thine own mercy, I have often asked thee, and thou hast often denied me, but yet if now thou wilt receive me, behold I bring pardon along with me, and peace along with me, and eternal life, and every good thing along with me; yet mercy is not gone, it is not yet denied to thee. When thou mayst gather such things from the Word of Christ, put the question to thy self, what sayest thou, oh my soul, thou hearest the gracious words of the Lord Jesus, he commands thee to come, he inviteth thee to come, he promiset thee acceptance if thou come, art thou willing, or art thou not? wilt thou persevere in thy former denial, and be damned, or wilt thou yield, and be saved? wilt thou consent to take him for thy husband, and subscribe unto his terms? doth thy judgment value him above all? and thy will chuse him above all? and thy affections go out after him above all things in the world? as a woman doth in all those three respects, when she taketh a man to be her husband.

Art thou so far convinced of the excellency of the everlasting glory of the Saints, and the perfection of that happiness that is above, as it is a state of perfect Holiness, as well as a state of real Happiness, that thou

thou art willing to part with any thing that might hinder thee from obtaining of it, and do any duty prescribed by God, though displeasing to thy flesh, and use them as means for the attaining of so excellent an end; wouldst thou have him whatever it cost thee? canst thou not be without him, what ever thou be without? then pass sentence for thy self, concluding thy condition to be happy.

This is the nearest way to find out thy condition; not stand wrangling with thy self, for thy former neglects, any further than for thy humiliation; and do not so much enquire what thou hast not formerly done, as what now thou art really willing to do.

Besides, this solemn, set examination, thou shalt find it very profitable to get and keep a sight of thy spiritual condition, to call thy self to an account every night before thou sleepest, where thou hast been that day, what thou hast done, what company thou hast been in, what sin thou hast committed, what duty thou hast omitted, and mourn if thou hast fallen, and return thy hearty thanks to God, if thou hast walked carefully and circumspectly that day; this counsel a Noble Heathen did give; to call our selves to an account before we sleepest.

3. Direction.

3. That thy assurance may be yet more compleat and full, and thy comfort arising from the same more enlarged; Fall down at the Throne of Grace, and beg earnestly, and pray importunately for the witness of the Spirit of God. For as it is the Spirit that worketh grace in us, so it is the Spirit that must discover the truth of that Grace to us, 1 Cor. 2. 12. Now we have received not the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Rom. 8. 16. The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God. But beware thou take not Satanical delusions for the spirits perswasion, or the conceit of thy own Brain, for the witness of the Spirit. The Spirit never witnesseth any thing to any man contrary to what is revealed in the Word; for he is a Spirit of Truth, and never speaks contradictions; therefore if any man thinketh that he hath the witness of the Spirit, testifying that he is a child of God, and yet is not holy, humble, penitent; he is deceived; but if thou hast the Graces of the Spirit, and the Spirit witnesseth so much unto thy Conscience, and with thy Conscience, 1. It inflameth thy heart with love to God and Christ, 2. It raiseth more hatred in thee to thy sin, 3. Thou findest a mighty strength and power in it, engaging thy soul to walk humbly; hoily with thy God, 4. A wonderful cogency in it to be zealous.

¶ Joh. 14. 13,
14.

lous for God in suffering any thing for his sake, and doing and obeying any thing that he enjoyns, — thou hast encouragement to ask this of God, because it is according to his will, (9) *Joh. 14. 2* 1-Lord, is it not according to thy will that I should be careful of my immortal soul? and make sure its eternal happiness and salvation? it is thy command I should do so, that I should examine my self whether I be in the faith, and whether Christ be formed in my heart. Lord, I have examined, but yet I cannot clearly see it. I see there is some grounds to hope it, but yet I cannot confidently assert it. Oh thou blessed Spirit of God, clear up mine understanding, and stir up and excite my Graces, that I may feel the actings of them in my soul, and so better discern them. Though this be arbitrary and not necessary, yet do to me as thou didst unto thy servant *David*, when he prayed that thou wouldst lift up upon him the light of thy countenance; thou puttest gladness into his heart. (r)

† Psal. 4. 6, 7.

4. Direction.

4. Press after the highest degrees of Grace, and be much in the exercise thereof, if thou wouldst clearly discern thy spiritual condition. The weakness of thy Grace makes thee doubt of the truth of Grace. The Christian must be like the Crocodile, * that grows as long as it lives, and ceaseth to be, when it ceaseth to grow. The body of a man is continually growing, till he come to his perfect age, and then ceaseth to grow; for then, though he may wax fat, and broader, yet he riseth not higher, and his bones have no increase. So when we come to our full stature in Christ, to our perfect age in glory, we shall grow no more, because then we shall be perfect; but in our minority we must be always growing, and a growing person is easily discerned to be a living person. A Dwarf cannot see so far as a taller man, nor be seen so far: So a little Grace cannot be so easily perceived amongst a crowd of sins and corruption.

When Grace at first is like *Elijah's* cloud, *1 Kings 18. 43, 44*. Little like a man's hand, it was hardly discerned, but when it did increase, and the Heavens were black with Clouds, every eye could then perceive them. Assurance is usually vouchsafed to Christians of the largest size. Men put not up a great Mast or Sail in a little Boat, but in a larger Vessel, that is able to bear it.

So also by the strong actings and exercise of grace it is discerned. A man in his sleep, when he acts not reason, cannot judge himself to be a man. A man in a swoon, when he cannot be perceived to breathe, stands by know not whether he be dead or alive, nor he himself.

Moral

Animi quies,
moving virtutis
est, the moving
activity of ver-
tue, is the set-
tled rest of the
mind,

Moral habits are acquired and strengthened by frequently repeated Acts, and more easily discerned. The fire lying raked under the ashes, is not so easily found, as when it being blown up, breaketh forth into a flame. He that hath strong love to God, will sooner feel it; and the more frequent it moveth, and is upon the wing after God, the sooner shalt thou know that thou lovest him. The being of a thing is proved by its operation. *Operari supponit esse.*

Direct. 5. Be well acquainted and informed in the nature of the Covenant of Grace, and the conditions thereof. Whatsoever are thy doubts, there is something in the Covenant of Grace, that would be ground of satisfaction to thee; is it thine own unworthiness? here rich and free Grace is laid open; is it thy long delay of coming into God, that now thou thinkest it is too late? the Gospel will tell thee, that Christ will not cast thee off, if now thou come unto him; is it thy ragged, torn, imperfect obedience? the covenant of Grace accepts of sincerity, though there be many infirmities; the intention of th: heart for the work of the hand; the purpose for the performance, where the sincere soul cannot do so much as he doth really desire to do.

Direct. 6. Prize the society of the people of God, that are acquainted with the workings of Gods Spirit upon their hearts. Be much in communion with the Saints. When they have been unfolding their doubts, they have been in some good measure resolved; this hath quickned their hearts when they have been dull, and blown up the sparks of love in their souls to God, that they have felt their hearts to burn within them (1), with love towards God.

Direct. 7. Keep a record of all the experiences thou hast had of Gods goodness to thee, and what thou hast formerly found (1) make it a means for the supporting of thy soul for the present, and the future. Such a time thou canst remember thou wast upon thy knees; bemoaning thy self, loathing thy self, full of sorrow and complaints, and God took thee up in the arms of his love, and spake like a friend, words of peace and comfort to thy soul, and bid thee be of good chear, he was reconciled to thy soul; he filled thee full sorrow, and afterward filled thee full of joy; he cast thee down, and raised thee up; he broke thy heart, and bound it up; he came to thee, as to Mary, expostulating with thee; sinner, why weepest thou? what aileth thee? thou weepest for thy Saviour, and he was by thee, and shewed himself unto thee.

So much for the means to obtain this certain knowledge of eternal life; but if by the use of these and the like directions, the soul cannot get this assurance; and though he search, and pray, and grieve,

R r

because

1 Luke 24. 37.
Psalm 68. 16.
Mal. 3. 16.
1 Pt. 77. 10, 11.

because he hath not the sight of God's countenance shining upon him, followeth the means, and longs to know his estate, and all things he enjoyeth, are lessened in his esteem, because he cannot see his interest in Christ, whom he doth most esteem. To thee I will give these directions.

Counsel to
those, that by
these directi-
ons, cannot yet
obtain this as-
urance.

First, *Though thou canst not say thy condition is good, yet do not say that thy condition is bad.* Though thou canst not affirm thou hast the faith of Evidence, yet do not peremptorily say, thou hast not the faith of Assurance; though thou hast not the witness of the spirit for thee, yet do not bear false witness against thy self; canst not thou say thou art sure of Heaven, yet do not say there is no hope of Heaven; though thou canst not own Heaven as thine, do not disown it; if thou canst not prove it, do not disclaim it. It is strange, yet ordinary, to see many doubting Christians dispute against themselves, and reason against their own comfort; tell them of their longing after Christ, their weeping and mourning for him, they doubt it is not in truth: if you say to them, if you do not truly love him, then let him alone, and follow no more after him; why do you grieve for him because you cannot find him, if you do not truly love him? they will reply, Conscience will put a man on to do something, when yet it may not be done out of love to God; if you ask, can you take up with any thing short of Christ, though indeed they cannot, yet they will reply, The heart is deceitful, and they know not what they should do. *Frame not Arguments against thy self, when thou canst not frame them for thy self;* live by faith; when thou canst not live by sense and comfort.

Take heed here, of judging thy condition to be bad, by trying thy self by rules, not so suitable to find out the being, and truth of grace, as the growth and increase of grace. And here,

1. Say not, thou hast no Grace, because thou hast not so much as thou seest others to have; to take notice of the eminent degrees of Grace in others, to provoke ourselves to labour after the same proportion, is good; but to argue for a nullity of Grace, because thou hast not such a quantity of Grace, as thou discernest in others, is not rational. Is there no water in the Brook, because there is not so much as in the River? Is there not light in a candle, because there is not so much as in the Sun? Wilt thou say thou art a Begger, because thou art not so rich as thy Neighbours, that have a full estate? Or, that thou knowest nothing, because thou knowest not so much as the greatest Scholar? Observe Peter in this case, John 21. 17. he did not say when Christ asked him, *Lovest thou me more than these,* I love thee more than John, or any of thy Disciples love thee, but, *I love thee;* thou must love Christ more

more than thou lovest any thing in the world besides; or else thou dost not sincerely love him: but thou must not conclude, that, except thou lovest him as much or more than others love him, that thou hast no love at all unto him: Yet this is ordinary, I never was humbled so much as others have been: I cannot mourn as others do, enquire now after the *truth*, rather than after the *degrees*, and know thy humiliation is true. First, when thou art broken for and from thy sin: so much bitterness upon the breast, as weaneth the child from it, is sufficient. Secondly, that makes thee see a necessity of Christ, and willing to close sincerely with him.

2. Say not, thou hast no Grace, because thou hast not grace proportionable to thy desires; but, rather hope thou hast it, because thou hast such enlarged desires after it: is not he a forward, unthankful child, that faith his Father hath given him nothing, because not so much as he desireth?

3. Say not, Thou hast no Grace, because thou seest corruption in thee more than before; they were in thy heart before, though thou didst not discern them; the house is full of filth, but while the shutts are up, it is not perceived, but take them down, and you see it plainly, not because there is more filth, but, because there is more light.

4. Not because of the indisposedness of thy heart to, and dulness of thy affections, sometimes in the time of holy duties.

Secondly, *When thou canst not get assurance, make as much improvement of the grounds, upon which thou mayest build (a) hopes of salvation.* Psal. 33. 18. & Psal. 148.

The probable grounds thou hast, thou wouldest not part with for all the World; if thy heart is not full of joy through sense of Gods love, yet thine eyes are full of tears, and thy soul of sorrow, through the sense of thy sin, wouldest thou change thy condition with any hypocrite whatsoever, with the richest man that hath no Grace? I would not have thee rest satisfied with a probability, but yet bless God for a probability of salvation: Is it nothing, that one that hath deserved hell most certainly, should have a probability that he should escape it; would not this be a little ease to the torments of the damned, if they had but a strong probability, that they may be saved; but no hope makes is heavy: when thou art sick, thou enquirest of the Physician, Sir, what do you think of me? shall I live? or shall I dye? if he reply, it is not certain, but there is good hopes, it is probable you will live, and do well; this is some support unto thee in thy sickness.

Thirdly, *Discourse with such Christians whom thou dardest not judge to be ungodly, and yet findest them to be in the same condition with thyself, ha-*

ving the same doubts, the same fears, complaining of the same sin, and do not pass a worse judgement upon thy self than thou dar'st upon them. This is a very useful way, either to convince, or support; to consider our case in a third person. Thus Nathan convinced David; 2 Sam. 12. 1. to the 15 ver. So the Prophet convinced Ahab; 1 Kings 20. 35. to the end of the Chapter. A man condemning another in the same case, becomes *dux totius turbae*, self-condemned. So a man approving of another in the same state and condition, cloathed with the same circumstances, as himself, is, to approve of himself; thou hearest another say, he knows not what to think of his present and eternal state; but yet thou seest, and he tells thee, he dares not willingly sin; the desire of his soul is to walk holily and humbly with his God, he dare not neglect a commanded duty; thou dar'st not say, this man hath no grace, it being as well with thee, say not worse of thy self.

Fourthly, *For sake not duty, because thou wantest comfort*; Thou hadst better want joy, than neglect duty; for duty is more necessary than comfort, and in order to it, therefore must be minded more; to seek comfort, may be in love to thy self; but to be constant in duty in the want of comfort, argues conscientious obedience to the commands of thy God. Though thou art not taken up into the arms of Christ, yet lie at his feet; though he doth not take thee into his bosome, yet throng among the croud to touch the hem of his garment. He might deny thee comfort, and yet own thee for his child; but thou canst not deny him duty, and yet own him for thy God: if he do not tell thee thou art his Son, yet do not thou say, thou wilt not be his (w) Servant. I beseech thee, say not, I will hear no more, I will pray no more. Ordinances are in vain, and all endeavours will be in vain. Casting off hope, clips the wings of serious, constant endeavours. Limit not God to thy time. Joseph did not presently discover himself unto his Brethren, but carried himself as a stranger to them. Joseph knew that they were his Brethren, but they knew not that they were related to him: but they often coming to him, and making known their perplexed condition in the grief and trouble of their souls, with sad complaints and moans; he could no longer refrain, his heart was full, his bowels did yearn, and the fire of love did so flame forth, that made his tears presently boyl over. I am Joseph your Brother, I will shew you kindness, be not troubled, Gen. 45. 1. and the following verses. While thou followest God with thy complaints, and preessest hard after Christ; he will at length shew, and make known himself unto thee. O thou weeping sinner, I am Jesus thy Brother, I am thy Redeemer, I will be thy Saviour,

Saviour; though thou hast dealt unkindly with me, yet I will receive thee with the sweet embracements of my everlasting love. Read *Psal. 85.8. Hos. 6. 1, 2, 3. Isa. 54. 7, 8.*

Fifthly, *Alwaies be more observant of the purpose and disposition of thy heart, the inclination of thy will, the general scope of thy life, than the passionate sense of joy and comfort.* There is but little constancy in these joys, like the tide, they ebbe and flow. Like a Land-floud, might overflow for a while, but a little after be dried up; joys are the *sweet-meats* of the soul, but are not for its constant fare and diet. For a spiritual banquet, not for a standing-dish. Thus it was with *David*. And the experience of Christians proves it.

Sixthly, *When thou canst not experience the sweetness of the Promise yet then firmly believe the verity of the Promise.* The Truth of the Promise doth not depend upon our sense and feeling of it, especially when we would; there might be *evidentia creditabilis*, when there is not *evidentia rei*, sufficient reason to believe, because it is a promise made by God, when thou dost not as yet see the performance of it. Though thou hast not tasted honey, yet thou wilt believe it to be sweet, if told by one that hath eaten thereof.

Seventhly, *Carry thy self really towards thy sin; as thou dost conceive, through mistake, God doth towards thee.* Thou sayest, God doth not love thee, be sure thou dost not love thy sin; thou sayest, he hath cast thee off; be sure thou cast off thy sin; smile as *little* upon thy sin, as in thy *greatest* darkness of discomfort, thou sayest God doth upon thee. Lighten the ship by casting thy sins over-board, and thou shalt come safe to shore. This Eclipse may be by the interpolation of some sin betwixt thee, and the light of God's countenance.

Eighthly, *Diligently observe what grace is of the greatest growth in thy soul, and make the best improvements of that for thy support.* The body natural doth grow in all the parts of it, but not equally, as to all dimensions; the finger grows not to the magnitude of the wrist or arm; In mixt bodies there are all the elements, but one is predominant. Amongst the many branches of a tree, one might out-top all the rest. In a ring of Bells, all sound, but the great Bell is heard above them all. In the new Creature there are all Graces *radically* and *seminally*, but yet one might be more eminent than the rest. In some, Faith (α); in some, love to God (γ) in *2 Mar. 15. 28.* some, sorrow for sin (ω); as every sin is *radically* in every wicked man, yet *Luk. 7. 44. 47.* some sin is grown to a greater height, and, like *Saul*, is taller than the rest; in one, covetousness; in another, passion; in another, pride. *2 Cor. 3. 7.* *Chro. 33. 12.*

Moral virtues are connexed *communi vinculo*, with a common bond,

yet

yet they may be in several degrees: Some have them in *gradu continuo*; that is, though the disorders and perturbations of the soul are very urgent and pressing, yet a man is able to resist, and to suppress them. Some in *gradu temperantiae*, when the passions are more sedate and calm; some in *gradu herosico*, when they are so subdued and restrained, that they are subject to the government and rule of Right Reason, the Guide and Leader of the soul. Now, that grace that is most eminent, is easily discerned. Make use of that.

Ninthly, *Bear not thine eyes, by alwaies poring upon thy sin, and woe, that are the reason of thy doubts and fears; but study also the Righteousness and fulness of Christ, for the supports of hope and confidence.* Know, that if thou hadst never so little sin, (a) yet thou hast need of a Saviour; and if thou hast never so much, he is willing and sufficient (b); if thou hadst never so much sorrow, and inherent grace, thou must be justified by the merits of Christ alone (c); and if thou hast but so much as is true and sincere, thou art justified, and shalt be (d) saved. Set thy Faith on work therefore, to lay hold upon Christ, and Faith will seek strength from Christ, as the child doth cleave to the Mother by the navel, and receive nourishment from her; a twig that is shaken by every wind, yet tied to the body of a tree, it standeth fast; eye thy sin to cast thee down, and Christ's Righteousness to raise thee up.

Gal. 3. 10.

1sa. 1. 18.

Job 9. 21.

1Cor. 4. 4.

Phil. 3. 8, 9.

Mat. 12. 20.

Tenthly, *Be more in practice than in disputes, and wherein thou wouldst inform thy judgements, proceed in a right method.* Many weak Christians cannot see the complexions of their faces, because they are alwaies looking into troubled waters, searching into needless disputes and questions, notional knowledge in the Scripture will never cure thy distemper, no more than bare reading of *Galen*, or the works of some Physician will recover a man from a fit of sickness.

And where thou wouldst be informed, proceed in a right method, question not thy election first, but thy true conversion. *God hath reprobated me, all will be in vain*; but thou must prove thy election by thy conversion, as the cause is discovered by the effect. *We must begin in this where God doth end, & end where God doth begin.* As on a Ladder, he that is above, if he would come down to you, must first use the top-rounds, but if you would go up to him, you must first use the bottom-rounds, and ascend step by step. Election is the uppermost round; sanctification is at the bottom; and by our sanctification we must climb up to see our names written in the Book of Life. In building, men proceed *methodo synthetica*; in pulling down, *methodo analytica*. If you would take a Watch to pieces, you must begin where the Watch-maker made an end.

end. The Carpenter, when he builds, first laies the foundation, and finishes the roof last: when he pulls down, he takes off the roof, and so to the foundation. God did first chuse, and then convert us; but we first know our conversion, and thereby our election.

Motives to give Assurance.

In the close, take these Motives drawn from the utility of this Assurance, to quicken thee further to labour after it. This Assurance will be, 1. Comfortable to thy self. 2. Profitable to others.

It will fill thee with comfort, 1. Under all God's Providences. 2. Under all God's Ordinances.

First, That is a desirable frame of spirit, that doth fit us to carry our selves under the various dispensations of divine providence (where-with the people of God are exercised) as most becomes the Gospel of Christ, and the profession we make. Assurance helps us in this. For,

1. Assurance sweetens every mercy, it is the Sugar in our Wine. He knows every mercy is given in mercy, and not in wrath: he knows it is not his portion; he hath much here, but he is sure he shall have more hereafter, but the want of this imbitters all outward enjoyments to the doubting Christian; who saith, what are the riches of the world to me, when I doubt whether the graces of the spirit are infused into me? what is gold without God's love? and what is plenty without hope of Heaven?

2. Assurance will lighten every burden; with this he can bear the burden of adversity (as Sampson did the gates of Gaza upon his back, Judg. 16. 3.) without sinking under it.

1. The assured Believer knows he is rich in the midst of Poverty, Col. 2. 2.

Though I cannot say riches are mine, yet I can say Christ is mine, and that is more. Though I cannot say silver and gold is mine, yet I can say grace and glory is mine, and that is better. This believer can look up towards Heaven, and say, yonder is the place, the Palace, the Kingdom I have a title to, above yonder Heavens must I for ever dwell, above yonder Sun is a mansion for me; oh I long to be there, where I know I shall for ever be. My heart is filled with joy while I think on it; oh what joy shall enter into me, when I shall enter into that joyful, blessed place; though now I walk in rags, I shall shortly be clothed with white and glorious Robes. Now a cottage is my house, but a stately building is prepared for me, 2 Cor. 5. 1. Job. 14. 2:3.

2. The assured believer rejoiceth in the sharpest sufferings for the Gospel sake.

He can despise and scorn all the scornings, threatnings, and reproaches of the ungodly world; for, though he seeth he is hated by men, yet he knoweth he is beloved by God.

3. Assurance

* Heb. 10. 34.
Acts 5. 40, 41.
& 16. 22, 24.
25. Compare
Gal. 2. 20. with
Acts 20. 23, 24.
& 21. 13.

3. Assurance is the best cordial in time of sickness, and a Sovereign remedy against the fears of death. But it is sad to be a doubting Christian, when thou art a dying Christian.

Secondly, The assured believer may with comfort approach to God in all his Ordinances. 1. He can go to the Throne of Grace with humble boldness, crying, *Abba Father*. 2. When he reads, or hears the Word of God, every part is welcome to his soul. When the Promises are opened, he can say, these belong to me; when threatnings are denounced, he can rejoice, because he is delivered from the misery threatened; when commands are urged, by assurance, they are much facilitated; this is my Father's command, I will do it; my Father's will, I will obey it. 3. He can approach with joy to the Lord's Supper, and sit there with great delight. He sees the wounds, the sufferings, the sorrows of Christ, all this was for me.

Secondly, This Assurance will make thee profitable unto others.

1. To the wicked. 2. To the godly.

1. To the wicked. By this the wicked shall be convinced, that Religion is a reality, that Ordinances are not empty things, when they must acknowledge surely these men meet with something from God in duty, which we are strangers to, that maketh them thus cheerful in all conditions.

2. By this they shall be convinced that *that* is false they have conceived of seriousness in Religion, that if they close with Christ, they shall never have a delightful, pleasant life more. Drooping, disconsolate, mourning Christians, strengthen this error in wicked men too much.

2. It will make thee profitable to the godly. 1. To the weak. 2. To the strong.

First, Thou wilt be profitable to the weak, by communicating thy experiences to them for their comfort and support, 2^d Cor. 1. 4.

Secondly, Thou shalt be profitable to the strong, that have the same assurance with thy self. When two such meet together, oh how sweet is their discourse of the joys of Heaven, and of the comforts of the Spirit, and the delights of the life of a Christian.

These advantages, amongst many others that I might have named, hath the believer that is assured of his spiritual-safe condition, that a believer that yet knoweth it not, doth not so fully enjoy. I shall conclude all with that exhortation of the Apostle, 2^d Pet. 1. 10, 11. *Wherefore the rather, Brethren give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure:-- for so an entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

What

What difference is there between the Conflict in Natural and Spiritual Persons?

Rom. 7. 23.

But I see another Law in my members warring against the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of sin which is in my members.

THE Apostle having shewed in the former Chapter, that Justified Persons are not under the Law, prosecutes and amplifies that choice Priviledge in this seventh Chapter, which hath four parts.

1. An Allegory, which shews there is no Part of the matching with Christ, till we be divorced from the Law, *Vers. 1. — 6.* Moses may be a good friend, but to fallen man he is ever an ill Husband, a bloody Husband, as he was to Zipporah, *Exod. 4. 25.*
2. A complaint, partly of the Law, as an occasion of sins malignity, *ver. 8, 9, 10.* and partly of his own estate. 1. Before Conversion (as either secure, or desperate, *ver. 9, 10, 11.*) Secondly, after Conversion (as troublesome and vexatious, *vers. 14. — 24.*)

Si

3. An

3. An Apologie, 1. For the Law as spiritual, holy, just, and good, v. 12, 14, 16. Secondly, For himself as under a force, &c. v. 15, 17, 20, 22, 25. The best Gospel Apology against sin, is (under Christ) before or after descent, 2 Cor. 7. 11. This grace will allow for a good clearing of our selves.

4. A Gratulation, v. 25. No man, especially, no godly man can, under the Gospel, want matter of thanks, be his condition never so sad, since the former is not altogether hopeles, and the later hath at present a part and interest in Christ.

Coherence.

My Text falls under the second head. The Apostle's condition was bad before Conversion, sad after Conversion, truly militant, and no release from this warfare, Eccles. 8. 8. Christ indured the contradiction of sinners, Heb. 12. 3. Christians, the contradiction both of sin and sinners, and that continually. May they not well complain? as Psal. 120. 5, 6, 7. and Gen. 25. 22.

Division of the Text.

In the words, note 1. An Act of Observation; Godly men are great observers, especially of themselves, ver. 18. *I know*, v. 21. *I find*, and in the Text, *I see*.

2. The matter observed (a Combate or Conflict) In which, note 1. The Combatants or Champions, the Law of the mind, and the Law of the members. The form of a Being, Naturalists call, a *Law*, *Bac. de forma Calidi Aphor. 7.* because *Forms* like *Laws*, and *Laws* like *Forms*, do ordinate and constitute Natural and Politick Bodies in their being, distinctions and operations. *Vatablus* calls it, *allum vim*, *Laws* as forms being principles of action. *Grotius* distinguisheth of a fourfold *Law*. 1. *Lex Dei*, recorded in Scripture. 2. *Lex Mentis*, the Judgement between things honest and dishonest. 3. *Lex Animalium*, the carnal or sensual Appetite. 4. *Lex Pecuniæ*, the Custom of sinning; to compleat which heads, we must (with the leave of that Learned Author) add two other distinctions, namely, 1. The Law of Original Sin propagated by Generation, which is strengthened by custome in evil, and together with our sensual appetite, composed, makes up the Law of sin. Secondly, The Law of fining Grace infused in Regeneration, which compleats the Law of the mind.

2. The equality of this fight in a reciprocal opposition, sin indwelling, fighting against Grace indwelling, and *contra Arab. Castramentum*, these being a pitched Bartel between Grace and Corruption; in which, some Graces and Corruptions bear the office of Commanders, others, of Common-souldiers: this is noted in the Proposition 2771, compare Heb. 12. 4.

3. The

3. The disparity of the fight managed by way of rebellion on the part of Sin, by way of Loyalty and Authority on the part of Grace: whence *Beza* and *Piscator* tender it *rebelliorem*.

4. The dubiousness of the fight, both parties often fighting as it were *aquo Marte*; sometimes one, sometimes the other seeming to get the better, as in the battel between *Israel* and *Amaleck*, *Exod.* 17. 11.

5. The sad event too often on the better side which is led *Captive*; in which term yet there is a mixture of comfort; Sin, when in Triumph acting as a Tyrant, not as a lawful Sovereign: The Law of the mind may be over-born by, but never indents with the Law of the members; as a person enslaved by force, but not by contract; or as School-boys, in a mis-rule, may shut their Master for a while out of doors; but at last he gets in, and they pay dearly for that affront. Withal, note in the Text, a mixture of civil and military terms to illustrate the spiritual conflict: there being a Law-suit, as well as a pitch'd Battel, between Grace and Corruption.

The Text is limited, by the Apostle, to the Regenerate; yet may The scope of in a good and true sense be extended to the unregenerate also, in the Text. whom there is a Law of the mind, namely, the Law of Reason, though not of Regeneration. Yea, *Porphyrius*, lib. 1. 212. *αποχρησ* uses the Apostle's phrase, calling it *τὸν νόμον τῆς νου*. Taking therefore the Law of the mind, and the Law of the members in a large sense, may not every one take up this complaint of the Apostle? Thence note,

In every man, especially in the Regenerate, there is a Conflict between the Law of the Mind, and the Law of the Members.

That it is so, appears by a threefold Evidence. The 8th.

1. By the testimony of Nature speaking in Heathen. Thus *Medes*; *Videor meliora, proboque, deteriora sequor*. So *Simplicius ad Epictetum*, *ἄλογος ὁρᾷς τὸν λόγον κινῆσαι* (τὸτ' ἐστὶν ἡμῶς τὰς κατ' αὐτὸν ἀσυνεμίας) καὶ ἀρχαῖαν τὴν λαβίστα. The irrational appetite displaces reason, &c. and leads it captive.

2. By testimony of Scripture, and that 1. As to the Godly, *Gal.* 5. 17. *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit*, &c. 2. As to the unregenerate, instance in *Herod*, who was troubled by this conflict between Lust and Conscience, *Mark* 6. 26. Yea, in the very Heathen, *Rom.* 2. 14, 15; who, by not hearkening to Conscience opposing sin in them, felt Conscience accusing them for sin.

3. By every mans experience. Who finds not every day within himself, a contest of contrary motions and inclinations? Are we not all in this point *Rebecca's*, big, though not with *Twins*, yet with an *Esau*

and a *Jacob*, two contrary Nations struggling each with other? *Gen. 25. ver. 22, 23.* Oh that we had all her wisdom and success.

The *Story*, why its so, will appear in the Explication and resolution of the special Case of Conscience assigned: which therefore here I pass.

Prem. fals.

Before I propound the Case, let me premise some particulars preparatory, as a Key of Explication.

1. As the great, so the little world (man) is made up of contraries: The outward man of contrary Elements, humours, health and sickness; the inward man, of contrary Principles; reason and passion, grace and corruption, conscience and sense.

2. Man is both an Actor in, and a Theatre of the greatest action and noblest conflict in the world, though usually invisible, and therefore not so much observed. *Prov. 16. 32.* He that conquers himself, is a nobler Heroe than *Alexander*, who conquered a great part of the World.

3. In the state of Innocency there was no conflict; in the state of Glory there will be no conflict, there being no corruption to combat with Grace. In a state of Minority (as infants and fools) there is no conflict till reason begin to dawn, and with it conscience to actuate common principles against the motions of innate corruption. In a state of corruption there is no spiritual conflict, because there is no renewing grace to combat with corruption, that strong man that keeps all in peace till a stronger than he comes, *Luke 11. 21, 22.*

4. The natural conflict is in every godly man, the spiritual conflict is in no wicked or natural man. This I note, to allay the fears of drooping Saints, who finding a conflict between conscience and corruption, conclude they are in the state of Nature, and search not for the conflict between Grace and Corruption. This is, as if a man should conclude he is a Beast, because he hath sense like a Beast, not considering that he hath reason super-added, which a Beast is not capable of.

5. There is a vast difference between the natural and the spiritual conflict. This will appear in the resolution of the case.

6. The mistake about these two conflicts. 1. Undoes natural men, who feeling a combat in themselves, fondly apprehend it to be the fight between the flesh and the spirit, and thereupon rest secure in a natural estate. 2. It troubles regenerate persons, and that in reference both to duty and comfort, making them drive heavily, because they doubt whether they be *Israelites* or *Egyptians*.

7. As

7. As the great wisdom of God lies in governing the great world made up of contraries; so the great wisdom of a godly man lies in governing the little world made up of like contraries.

8. This government lies principally in discerning these conflicting contraries, and improving their contrariety for the advantage of the outward and inward man. He is the wisest Physician who can govern the body made up of contraries; and he is the wisest Christian who can rule his soul in the midst of contraries; In this Government Christ is Principal, *Psalm 110. 2. A Saint Instrumental; Hab. 11. 12.*

9. This singular wisdom is attainable in the use of ordinary means, and that by the meanest who have grace to follow Christ's conduct; yet not by the power of free-will, or humane industry, but by the bounty of free and special Grace, *1 Tim. 3. 15. Jam. 1. 5. Rom. 9. 16.*

10. It cannot be expected that any unregenerate person should understand to purpose the difference between these two conflicts; because he hath no experience of this double State, and double Principle. No wonder then, if such say of me as the *Jew* did of the Prophet, *Ezek. 20. 49. Doth he not speak Parables?* However, for the sake of the Unregenerate, to convince them; and for the sake of the Regenerate, to comfort them; I shall endeavour (plowing with Christ's Hser) to find out this great Riddle. And so I come to the Case, and a case of the highest concernment.

Wherein doth the Natural and Spiritual conflict differ? or, what difference is there between the conflict in the Natural and Spiritual man? *Quest.*

They differ principally in seven particulars, and *Ans.*

1. In the ground or cause of the fight, which in the Unregenerate is, 1. Natural Principles, or the reliques of Gods Image in the Understanding: The Notion of a Deity, and of loving my neighbour as my self, &c. are Principles cannot be rased out of any mans heart, be he never so profest an Atheist; nor can these principles lye alwaies idle, but will more or less be in action against corrupt inclinations.

2. Acquired Principles from common illumination; moral and religious education and custome. This light discovers more of sins obliquity and danger, thereby laying on a stronger bridle of restraint through fear, shame, &c. and adding spurs to the exercise of many parts of piety.

3. The natural temper of the body which indisposes to some special sins, as well as to some special graces. As all souls, so original corruption.

corruption in them may be equal, yet not act equally, because of the indisposedness of bodily Organs. Thus some naturally are more chaste, sober, and meek than others, and hence their temper advances the combat against the lusts that oppose the fore-mentioned virtues.

4. The contrariety of one lust to another. Grace is uniform, and each virtue linked together in a perfect subordination: but sin is divided, and opposite to it self as well as to Grace. Thus Ambition saies, Spend; Covetousness saies, Spory; Revenge incites to murder; Self-love restrains for fear of an halter. Here now is a combat, but only between flesh and flesh, between flesh more refined, and flesh more corrupted. The best of these may be called a counter-motion (as in dust and clouds agitated by contrary winds) but not properly a conflict or fight; because they proceed not from a true vital principle, there being in a natural man, no principle of Spiritual Life.

On the other hand, In the Regenerate, the combat ariseth from the Antipathy of two contrary Natures perfectly hating each other, *Gal. 5. 17.* Of all affections (as one notes well) Love and hatred are first, and most uncompoundable. A godly man hates sin as God hates it, not so much for its danger, as for its loathsomeness; as some creatures hate filth, so that they will rather dye than defile themselves. One Woolf may snarl at another, but the quarrel is not laid in their Natures as it is in the Woolf and Lamb, which therefore cannot be reconciled. God in Paradise first sounded the Trumphet to this Alarm, *Gen. 3. 15.* proclaiming an eternal War between this seed of the Woman, and of the Serpent. As in persons, so much more in principles, there is a mutual abomination. Compare *Psal. 139. 22. Prov. 29. 29. Psal. 97. 10. and 119. 128. and Rom. 8. 7.* Enemies may, but Enmity can never be reconciled.

II. They differ in the object or matter of conflict; which in a natural man is, 1. Grosser evils that startle the Conscience. 2. Infamous evils that are attended with worldly fear or shame; or 3. Some particular evils that cross temper, education, or custome, etc.

But in spiritual persons the matter of conflict is, 1. Little sins as well as great. 2. Secret sins as well as open. 3. The first rising as well as the gross acts. 4. Sins which promise worldly safety, credit, profit, contentment, as well as those sins that threaten the contrary. 5. In a word, all moral evils, hatred and antipathy being of the whole kind, *Psal. 119. 128.* especially of those evils which most endanger the New-man, *Psal. 18. 23.* and such as are beloved sins, *Mat. 18. ver. 8. 9.*

III. They

III. They differ in the subject of the conflict. In natural men, the fight is in several faculties, reason fighting against sense and passion, or the dictate of conscience against the corrupt inclination of the will; whence the fight is more at a distance by missile Arms and velitation. But in the regenerate man, the fight is more close in the same faculty, the wisdom of flesh and spirit counter-acting in the same understanding, the lustings of the flesh and spirit in the same will: whence the fight is as it were *inter Triarios* Grace and Corruption immediately; which at first haply was managed by the *Hollati* and *Scutari*, Reason and Interest. The former is like the fight of the Souldiers of Fortune, more lazy, and by way of Siege; the later more keen and vigorous by way of Assault and Onslair; like that of *Standerbeg*, who fought with his Enemies breast to breast in a Box or Grate.

IV. They differ in the Instruments or weapons wherewith they combat. The natural mans weapons are (like himself) carnal; to wit, natural or moral reason, worldly fears or hopes, and sometimes spiritual fears or hopes, but carnalized; namely, slavish fear, and mercenary hopes. But the Regenerate mans weapons are Spiritual, 2 Cor. 10. 4. to wit, gracious Interest, and all the Spiritual Armour, Ephes. 6. ver. 17. 18; especially the Shield of Faith, and the Sword of the Spirit.

V. They differ in the manner of the fight. The natural mans combat is more mercenary; admits of more Parleys, cessations, correspondencies as 1 Sam. 15. 9. *Saul's* fight with *Amaleck*. But the spiritual man (as such) fights it out to the last, and will give no Quarter. The former is like the strife between Wind and Tide, which often come about, and are both of one side; the later is like the Dam and the Tide, that strive till one be born down: or like Stream and Tide meeting and conflicting till one hath overborn the other.

VI. They differ in the extent of the conflict, in relation to its subject and duration. The extent of the Subject is double. 1. As to the Faculties. 2. As to the Acts. As to the Faculties; The fear of War in the Regenerate, is every faculty, flesh and spirit being ever mixed (as light and darkness in every point of Air in the twilight) 1 Thes. 5. 23. Grace and Corruption leaven the whole man: So that in the Regenerate, there is at the same time both a Civil and a Foreign War, that in the same faculty, this in one faculty against another.

Contrariwise, in the Unregenerate there is usually nothing but a foreign War between several faculties, there being nothing of spiritual good in their wills and affections, to set the same faculty against itself.

2. It extends also to every act of piety and charity, (especially if more spiritual) *Rom. 7. 21.* For which, the natural man hath no conflict, (but against them) unless it be to stop the mouth of conscience in-lightened, &c. Nor indeed doth he know experimentally what spiritual acts of Piety are. But the regenerate find it by constant experience, Faith and Unbelief, Humility and Pride, ever opposing and counter-working each other: whence he is forced to cut his way through his Enemies, and to dispute it step by step. Others may seek, but he strives, *Luke 13. 24.* and takes the Kingdom of Heaven by an holy violence, *Mat. 11. 12.* in spite of spiritual enemies that way-lay him within and without.

3. As to the extent of duration of the War, which being in the Regenerate irreconcilable, must needs be interminable; like the War between the *Romans* and *Carthaginians* that was intayl'd to Posterity; or as fire and water will fight for ever, if together for ever. In the natural man (contrariwise) the quarrel is soon took up, as between the *Romans* and other Nations; there being no that antipathy between Reason and Corruption, as there is between Grace and Corruption.

VII. They differ in the concomitants and consequents of the fight. And 1. The fight in natural men may stand with the constant practice of, and living in sin, against the light of Conscience. Godly men sin more with knowledge, but wicked men more against knowledge. He that is born of God doth not commit sin, that is, make a trade of living and lying in known sin, *1 Joh. 3. 9.*

2. The fight in the Unregenerate hinders not the perfection and consummation of sin in the antecedent deliberation and purpose, in the present delight and complacency, and the following pertinacy and impenitency. Instance in *Saul, Herod, Judas*, and others. But the Spirit, by its conflict, breaks the power of sin in all these in the Regenerate, that they can neither do good as they would, nor sin as they otherwise would, *Gal. 5. 17.*

3. The fight in natural men seeks only the repression, not the suppression of sin, to lop the superfluous branches, not stub up the root; to charm the Serpent, not to break its head. But the spiritual fight seeks the full mortification and abolition of sin, *Rom. 6. 6.* (hatred seeks the destruction of its Enemy, *1 Sam. 24. 19.* and *1 Joh. 3. 15.*) and the compleat perfection of Grace, though not attainable in this life, *Phil. 3. vir. 10. — 14.* This for the first branch of Wisdom, which teaches to discern between the natural and the spiritual Conflict.

The

The second Branch of Heavenly Wisedome, lyes in improving Application, these Spiritual Contrarieties, by siding with the spirit against the flesh.

1. This is done. 1. By watching all the forces, designs and motions of the Enemy. We have in us Legions of these Devils, the meanest of them too strong and too subtil for us, *Heb. 3. 13.* true *Gibeonites*, that can easily cheat us with their mouldy bread, and clouted Garments; Sons of *Anak*, all of one confederacy, and sworn Enemies of our salvation; had we not need have our eyes in our heads, and set watchfulness upon the forlorn hope? *1 Cor. 16. 13.*

2. By making head early against the Enemy. *Principis obsta*, &c. nip sin in the bud, crush this Cockatrice in the shell, strangle this hellish-Brat in the birth; take heed of the first appearances of evil, take its first Allarms; slight not the smallest sin or occasion of sinning. How much mischief is done by a little wound, a little Thief, a small Spark? *Jam. 3. 5.* and *2 Sam. 11. 2.*

3. Oppose especially thy Master-Lust. Fight (in comparison) neither against small nor great, but against the King of these Hellish Regiments, *1 Kings 22. 31.* Be sure to pull out that right eye. This is the Skirt Satan laies hold of, in wrastling with thee, to thy hazard, and his no small advantage; The *Goliath* and *Holofernes*, who being once slain, the *Philistims* and *Affyrians* will soon be routed. Throw the head of this *Sheba* over the wall, and the enemy will retreat shamefully.

4. Never enter the field without thy Second: Fight under the Shield, as well as under the Banner of thy General. In other fights the General flies to the Battel upon the wings of his Army, but here the Army flies upon the wings of their General. This is done by Faith and Prayer. Thus *David* conquered *Goliath*, *1 Sam. 17. 45.* and the *Philistims*, *2 Sam. 5. 19, 23.* Fight always upon thy knees; Let *Moses* be praying while *Joshua* is fighting, *Exod. 17. 11.* May not Christ take it ill if thou carry thy self as if thou meantst to steal a victory before he know of it?

5. Put on, keep on, stand in, and exercise thy Spiritual Arms, *Ephes. 6. v. 10.—18.* That only is Armour of Proof: never any girds it on but may boast before the Victory. Allude to *1 Kings 20. 11.* never any fought prosperously without it: It's our metal as well as our weapon: Neither Earth, nor Hell can stand against this Artillery of Heaven. Let not Satan find thee disarmed, lest he leave thee dispoyled. There is no fighting with carnal weapons against a spiritual

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Enemy.

Enemy. You may as well beat the Devil with a sword or spear, as conquer sin by the power of Free-will, or with moral and worldly Arguments. They are but paper bullets and paper walls, the scorn, not the Terror of Hell, though useful in some cases. Remember withal, there are no Arms for thy Back-parts.

6. With some Lusts fight like the *Parthians*, flying, 1 *Cor.* 6. 18. and 2 *Tim.* 2. 22. This is but an honourable retreat, and warlike stratagem, *Josh.* 8. 15. *Judg.* 20. 32. Youthful Lusts are like the *Basilisk*, or like a burning-glass in the Sun, that may not be looked on, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. with other Lusts fight like the *Romans*, charging home.

7. Entertain no Parley with thy Enemy. This cost all mankind dear at first *Gen.* 3. ver. 1.—4. It's disloyal, looks like a confederacy, and is very dangerous. Come not into *Joabs* tent, sleep not in *Dalilabs* lap, talk not with *Joab* lest he smite thee under the fifth Rib. Sin and Satan are too cunning Sophisters for us to dispute withal. He in a manner gives up his Cause, that will plead it with the Devil. The best Answer to Satans Suit, is, a round and churlish denial, *Zach.* 3. 2. *Mat.* 4. 10. *Jude* ver. 9. Parleying is a kind of faint denial, and draws on this impudent Suiter.

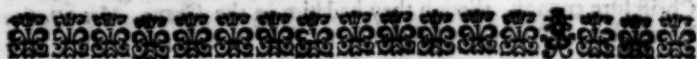
8. Take advantage by every thing that befalls thee in this Spiritual Warfare. Eye thy reserves: The Captain of thy Salvation is both thy Vanguard and thy Rereward, and will be thy Reward: Thou gaineest thy Husband, as *David* did his Wife, by conquering these *Philistims*: and, while thou art fighting for him, he is weaving thy Crown: 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. Eye thy fellow-souldiers, those Worthies of the Heavenly *David*, that are both Militant and Triumphant, *Heb.* 12. 1. Example is very forcible. Yea, take advantage by thy very Foyls, to be more humble, charitable, dependent, watchful and courageous. Let not the Enemy gain the field, after Conquest, by a back-blow of Pride. This *Antiochus* gains (often) more by flattery than by force, *Dan.* 11. 21, 22. It's honourable for Christ to say, *well done*, &c. but dangerous for Satan to say, *well done*; and safe for thee to say, *poorly done*, when thou hast done thy best. Despise thy self when others admire thee; and be assured, that self-admiration is the most dangerous Devil in the World. Especially, improve Advantages prudently, when thou hast thy Enemy on the hip; yea, on the ground: fall with all thy weight upon him; give him no Quarter, lest thou meet with the doom of *Abab*, 1 *Kings* 20. 42. and of the *Israelites*, *Numb.* 33. 55, 56. Here, as one notes well,
Learn

Learn Wisdom of the Serpents-Brood, who never thought they had Christ sure enough, though they had him in the Grave, *Mat. 27. 64.* Remember; it's thy highest Wisdom, first to discern, next to improve the Spiritual Contraries that act in thy own bosome. He is the wisest man that knows himself, and he the strongest man that conquers himself. This alone is the true *Israelite*, who by conquering himself, doth (in a pious sense) overcome both Heaven, Earth, and Hell, *Gen. 32. 28.*



T t 2

V What



What Faith is that, which except we have in Prayer, we must not think to obtain any thing of God?

James 1. 6.

But let him ask in Faith.—



Or the Connexion of these words with the former, since they will not give much light to the Question I am to handle, and the time will hardly permit things more necessary to be spoken, I shall wholly wave or very briefly speak to.

The Subject I am to speak to, is to shew what is meant here by asking *in Faith*, or what Faith that is, which who so hath not, must not, or hath no reason to expect to receive any thing from God. God may bestow his mercies where and on whom he pleaseth; but he is no way engaged by promise to bestow any mercy on such an one that asketh not in Faith. It is not said, that such an one should expect any great matters from God, but not any thing at all, the least mercy is greater, then he hath any reason to think he shall receive, not only he shall not receive Wisdom, spoken of *ver. 5.* but not any thing. Wisdom he may get as *Achishophel* did, and many other things without praying in Faith, or praying at all, but for Divine Wisdom or for any blessing from God, he may think what he will, but if the Apostle may be thought worthy to advise him, he would not have him think to receive any thing, except he ask, and ask in Faith. Therefore it much concerns us to know what is meant by asking in Faith, since the want of it makes our Prayers of none effect; if we pray without it, we may pray, but you cannot justly expect any return of your Prayers, except it be as of an arrow shot

shot up to Heaven upon your own head to your wounding. Of this Question I shall speak very plainly, as the Lord shall enable me in the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, Comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual things.

Some may make it to imply more to ask *in* Faith than to ask *with* Faith, or that it is more to be *in* Faith, than for Faith to be *in* us. To be *in* Love is more than to love, and when it is said, *Rev. 1. 10.* that the Apostle was *in* the Spirit, it shews that not only he *had* the Spirit, and was filled with it, but there were great overflowings, and a superabundance of the Spirit. This the Apostle seems to call, *James 5. 15.* the Prayer of Faith, as if their Faith rather prayed than *they*, as *Paul* speaks, *It is not I, but the Grace of God in me*, when Faith rather may be said to act *us* than we to act Faith.

But I suppose those high degrees of Faith cannot be meant here, because it is said, that they who have not this Faith, must not think to receive anything, not the least; if so, then the highest degrees of Faith should be required for the obtaining the lowest degrees of Mercy; but Scripture promises are made to the *Truth*, and not to the *degrees* of Grace. To Faith that is but as a grain of Mustard-seed to remove Mountains, and to Love that is but a spark to be victorious, *Mat. 12. 20.* but I shall rather endeavour to shew you how Faith is taken here, than how it is taken in other places; therefore, To ask *in* Faith, may be here spoken in reference to the Person that prays, *viz.* he that prays must be in the Faith a faithful or Righteous Person. The Scripture is full to this purpose, as *Psal. 66. 18.* *If I regard iniquity in mine heart,* though my tongue do not plead for it, nay, though it speaks against it; though I refrain from it in my Life; for one may love the sin we commit not, and if I do so regard it in mine heart God will not hear my Prayers: if I give it so much as a good look, for so the *Hebrew*, *if I see iniquity in my heart,* if I take pleasure in sin, for *David* calls it *painful iniquity*, for so in the *Hebrew*. No Saint can live without committing sin, but all Saints live without regarding it in their hearts. So also *James 5. 15.* *The Prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, how much is not set down, because it cannot be set down *how much* it avails, as *much* as they please, they may have what they will; but for a wicked man though his Prayers were effectual they avail not much, since their desires are for temporals. The other places are full to this point, *viz.* that the Prayers of none but Righteous persons are accepted with God, as *John 9. 31.* *Chap. 1. 15.* *Prov. 28. 9.* & *John 3. 15.*

I. To

1. To this may be objected, that many unregenerate and profligate Wretches have obtained by Prayer, as scoffing *Ismael*, *Gen. 21. 17.* nay *Abah*, a man that sold himself to work wickedness, prevailed with God, for an adjournment of the Judgment denounced.

I answer, 1. This was done by way of Common providence, or Gods prerogative, not by way of promise, so that they could not reasonably expect that their Prayer should be heard.

2. God did this to honour the Ordinance of Prayer. As when our children come and tell us of some poor body, though we may not think it fit to relieve him in respect of his wants, yet we give him, for fear we should hinder our children from acts of Charity; for they not knowing our reason of denying him relief, will expound it to be our neglect of the poor. So many times God may give to bad men, lest good men should be discouraged from Prayer.

3. God gives to wicked men when they pray, oft-times for the strengthening of his peoples Faith; for they may be sure if God hears the Croakings of Ravens, he will hear the Mournings of Doves.

II. You may farther say, are wicked men bound to pray, since their Prayers are an abomination, and they cannot ask in Faith?

I answer, 1. Inability to pay a debt, doth not acquit one from it, nor Cancel the Obligation. If one blows out the Candle, one cannot excuse ones self for not working, by saying that they could not work in the dark; nor can a boy excuse himself from saying the Lesson he hath torn out of his Book.

2. Because wicked men break others of Gods Commandments, it cannot justify them in the breaking of this, sin doth super-induce a new Obligation, viz. to punishment, but doth not cancel their former, viz. to Duty.

3. Wicked men sin not in praying, but in praying so.

4. Doubtless the wickedst man in the World is bound to desire Grace.

III. But doth not this make God a respecter of persons, since he will hear none but his own Children, and them that love him; if a Judge should favour his relations in Judicature, he should be unjust.

I answer No, God is no respecter of persons, by doing thus.

1. Because the Prayers of Saints better, as well as their persons nearer; for the Prayers of the wicked are lazy, irreverent, brutish, wanton Prayers, *Hos. 7. 14.* if Gods People should pray so, God would not hear them neither.

2. If Unbelievers could pray better than Saints, yet God might acquit.

quit the Saint and condemn the Unbeliever, as a Judge may pass Sentence against one who hath paid ninety and nine pounds of an hundred, and acquit another who hath not paid a farthing, if his surety hath paid it.

3. Though in matter of Justice we are not to respect persons, *Levit. 19. 15.* yet in matters of favour we may, *Gal. 6. 10.* This may be the first meaning of the words, but not only, nor as I conceive the chief. Therefore,

II, *To ask in Faith*, is, to believe, that all we say in Prayer is true, when we confess our selves to be grievous sinners, we are to think our selves to be as great sinners as we say we are; when we call God Almighty our Father, we are to believe him to be so.

Then the poor Soul will say, Alas I cannot pray in Faith; for I cannot say our Father, since I do not believe that I am his child, how then can I call him Father?

I Answer, 1. Thou mayst call him Father, for he is my Father; if thou shouldst see divers children playing some untowardness in the street, and should see a man that passed by, go and single out one of them, and correct him, and yet the child should follow him, would you not say he was the father of that child? for a strange child would flye from him, or flye at him if he should strike him. Dost thou not follow God when he corrects thee? be of good comfort, God is thy Father, and thou art his child.

When that precious man Mr. Murcot was in great anguish, fearing that God was not his Father, these words were impressed on his mind, *If I am not thy Father, why dost thou follow after me?*

Nay, not only God is thy Father, but thou thinkest so also. When *Naamans* servants called him father, what did they mean, but to shew that they acknowledged that he carried himself rather as a Father than a Master. When the Prodigal returned, though he acknowledged that he was not worthy to be called his Son, yet he called him Father since he had failed of nothing that might be expected from a loving tender Father. Mayst not thou call God thy Father upon this account, hath he not dealt with thee in abundance of tender Compassion, nay more than the tenderest Parent in the World. Give God the Glory due to his goodness, call him Father; for thou mayst truly say he hath dealt so with thee. The same Mr. Murcot being troubled upon the same account, viz. the fear that God was not his Father, had these words come into his mind, with power, viz. *If I am not thy Father, am I thy Enemy?* God argues thus with the Jews, *Deut. 32. 6.*

III. We

III. We are to believe, that whatsoever we ask of God in Prayer is according to his will, 1. *John* 5. 14.

The poor doubting Soul will say then, I dare not pray for the recovery of my child, since I know not whether it be the will of God it shall recover or no.

I Answer, Thine asking what God hath decreed not to give, makes not thy Prayer sinful, but thine asking what he hath forbid thee to desire; for the will of Gods Decree is not the rule for us to walk by, but the will of his Command, *Deut.* 29. 29. If what we pray for be such as is lawful and good for us to desire, though God should tell us by a Prophet that he would not grant it, yet we might lawfully pray for it, and be blameless; for so did *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12. nay, though God should send us word by a Prophet that we should dye and not live, yet we might pray, and not only be blameless but successful, for so was *Hezekiah*, nay, though God should forbid us to pray, yet since he commands us to pray in his Word, we may pray and be heard; for though God bid *Jacob* let him go, yet he wrestled on and obtained the blessing: and *Moses*, though God bid him let him alone, yet *Moses* did not let him alone, and prevail'd. So then to ask things according to the will of God, is to ask nothing that is unlawful to ask, as for one to pray that God would prosper us in evil ways, this is to ask what is not according to his will. I say, you are to pray for nothing that is any way unlawful to be desired. Now it is not enough that the thing it self be lawful to be desired, but the end for which we desire it must be lawful; for if we desire lawful things for unlawful ends, we ask amiss, *Jam.* 4. 3. The end why we desire such a mercy must be such, as God approves of by his Word, as well as the thing it self. To desire gifts of Edification for Ostentation, though according to the Will of God as to the thing desired, yet as to the end it is abominable.

As concerning the matter of our Prayers we are to believe, as hath been said, so as to God we are to believe several things. Indeed scarce any of his Attributes but some way or other we are to act our Faith upon in Prayer, but I shall choose some few on which the eye of Faith is especially fixed in Prayer.

The first is Gods *Omniscience*, for else we shall be at a great loss.

I. If we believe not this, how can we be assured that God hears our Prayers.

For 1. In respect of the number of Prayers, there being Millions of Prayers put up at the same time to God, if he be not Omniscient how

How is it possible he should hear all, if any should not be heard, how knowest thou that thine is not the Prayer that is not heard.

2. In respect of the Secrecy of Prayer; for except God know our hearts he cannot know our prayers; for it is the heart that prays, the tongue only speaks, *Ora mens, lingua loquitur*.

3. If God knew not the heart, the poor soul who pray'd with sighs and groans that cannot be exprest, should find no acceptance; when the hypocrite that speaks much and means nothing, shall be heard for his much babbling.

4. The Saints ask such things that require infinite Knowledge and Wildom to do for us; for when we desire God to make us know him, it requires more wildom, than for us to teach an Infant the Mathematicks. So we desire God to cure us of our spiritual distempers, alas they are so various, so contrary, so deeply rooted in our Natures, we are such froward unruly Patients, that it requires infinite Wildom to heal us; for when God goes to cure our Pride by afflicting us, then our impatience is increased: That which is the cure of one corruption increaseth another.

If we believe not Gods Wildom and Omniscience, we cannot acquiesce in Gods answer of prayers; for we may suffer, but not acquiesce in Gods answer of Prayers.

II. We are to believe Gods Providence, that he rules and orders all things. Who so thinks that all things are ruled by second Causes, by the Power and Policy of Men, or by the Stars, or Chance, they will not Pray at all, or go to God merely as a refuge: We shall pray to God, but trust to our selves, or to Medicines when we are sick, and to our food when we are well. We may be confident we shall be delivered, but we shall not at all trust that God will deliver us. To strengthen our Faith in this we must know, that those things that seem to be least within the compass of Providence, are wholly guided by it.

1. Things Natural; God makes the Sun to arise, and the Rain to fall, *Mat. 5. Gives to every seed his own body, 1 Cor. 15.*

2. The smallest things they escape not Providence; God numbers the hairs of our head, *Mat. 10. 30.*

3. Things casual, *Pro. 16. 33.* That which we call Chance-medley, is providential as to God: The man in *Kings* drew a Bow at a venture, and yet God directed it to an hairs breadth.

4. The Counsels of men, yea against God, yet are ordered by the determinate Counsel of God, *Acts 2. 23.*

5. Things most unruly; The raging Sea goes so far and no further

by Gods Decree: the roaring Lion cannot destroy a Swine, nor afflict nor tempt a Saint, without Gods leave, *Job. 1. Luke 22. 32.* The wrath of Man as well as the rage of the Devil, is ordered and restrained by the Wisdom and Power of God. *Psal. 66.*

6. The skill and inventions of men, *1sa. 28. 27, 28.*

7. Sin it self, whether of Omission or Commission, as silence and discord in Musick, serves to make the Harmony sweeter.

III. Gods Omnipotence is to be believed, else we will stagger through unbelief. This was that in which the eminency of Abrahams Faith did appear, *Rom. 4. 21.* and of the Centurion's, *Mat. 8.* and Christ far more blames them that question his Can than his Will, for he doth not so much as reprove the Lepet, *Mar. 8.* but sharply reproveth him, *Mar. 9.* that he makes him weep, because he said, *If thou canst*; and he saith, *If thou canst believe*, to shew that we cannot believe, if we do not believe Gods Power. We doubtless are generally faulty this way, though we are ashamed to own it, as you may see by this instance. If we have two children sick, the one whose death would be far more afflictive to us, hath some cold or some other small distemper, the other of some mortal disease, and given up by Physicians; thou prayest for the recovery of both, but for which of those two recovery art thou least confident? is it not of his who is most sick? and why so? but because thou questionest Gods Power and Providence: If thou shalt say, my sins are so great, God will not hear my Prayers and heal my Child, for if indeed that were the reason of thy fearing that God will not hear thee, thou wouldst rather fear it as to thine other child, since his death would be more afflictive.

Now the Saints have more reason to strengthen their Faith in the Omnipotence of God in Prayer, than wicked men; for because the things worldly men desire, need not Omnipotence to do. A Creature may do what they desire, except God will withdraw his common Providence, for one that is worth an hundred thousand pounds can make a poor man rich; and some Medicines in an ordinary way of Providence have vertue to cure many Diseases: But the things the People of God desire, cannot be done but by Omnipotence, *Ephes. 1. 19.*

IV. We must act our Faith upon his Goodness and Bounty, for we must not only have high thoughts of Gods other Excellencies, but of his Goodness also, of his abundant willingness to do us good, and loathness to afflict us, for surely he never afflicts us but in case of necessity, *1 Pet. 1. 6.* *If need be you are in many Tribulations.* When he afflicts us he only gives us necessities, but when he bestows Mercies, he gives us not only for our necessity, but richly to enjoy. When we go to a Covetous man

man for money, he parts with every penny as with a drop of blood; for us to think God parts so with his Mercies, that he is hard to be intreated, and that he is an hard Master either for *Work* or *Wages*, are thoughts utterly unworthy, and shamefully dishonourable to the Goodness of God. If thy Child, whose finger if it should but ache, thine heart akes, should think thou grudgest him every bit of meat he eats, thou wouldst think him a wretched Child unworthy of thy tender affections; and must it not be far worse in thee to have such thoughts of God? since *etiam pater noster, etiam pater noster*. Was it so great a grief to *Peter* to have Christ question his love? *John* 21. 17. though he had given but sad testimony of his Love but lately; and can it choose but much offend God for thee to question Gods Love to thee, nay, his Goodness in it self, when God hath given thee no cause of either. *Mal.* 2. 1. We should go to God with as much confidence of his Love, and readiness to do us good, as the Child doth to the tenderest Parent, as we do to the dearest Friend we have in the whole world, and much more abundantly. If we do not believe that the goodness of God is as much above the goodness and love of our dearest friend, as we account his Wisdom and Power above our friends, we have unworthy thoughts of that Attribute which God hath most abundantly manifested, and would have most glorified; and the love our friend bears us is but a drop from and off that Ocean that is in God. Doubtless God loves his Enemies more than we love our Friends; he loves us more (if we love him) than we love our selves or him. Surely God loves the weakest Spirit on Earth more than the highest Angel in Heaven loves him; for when God saith, that he *So loved the World*, it was such a *Sic* there was no *Sic* for it; it might not be said as the Angels loved God. Ah we deal unworthily with God in having base low thoughts of his goodness, he hath little deserved it at our hands, he that hath done such Wonders and Miracles of Mercies for us, and hath promised to do more. Say that every Mercy is too great for thee to receive, but say not that any is too great for God to give; Surely, surely God is more willing to give, than we are to receive Mercies.

But you will say, *If God be so willing to bestow Mercies, why doth he not bestow them without Prayers, and such importunity?*

I answer, God doth not thus because he is not willing, but because we are not fit for Mercies, for God *wants to be Graciously*: The tender Mother had rather give her child Cordials than bitter Pills, but her child is sick. By our Prayers we make not God more willing, but we become more prepared for Mercies; for our Prayers exercise, and so strengthen Grace, and strong Grace weakens and mortifies Corruption, and then we are fit

for mercies. God only stayes while he may bless us indeed, as *Jabez* phraseth it. One that is in a Boat and pulls a Rope whose other end is tied to a Rock, pulls not the Rock to the Boat; but the Boat to the Rock; so our importunities move not God, but us.

But you will say, When we pray for others this reason holds not, for their graces are not encreased by our praying for their deliverances from misery or danger, or the Church from persecution.

I answer, It is true, but our Prayers add to our reward, for God is in goodness as Satan is in badness; and much more abundantly; whereas when Satan hath a Commission and intends to do some mischief, he, as oft as he can, engageth Witches to put him upon doing that which he intends to do, howsoever that he may involve them in the guilt, as if they themselves, or that he had not done it if they had not put him upon it. So God, that the Saints may have the reward of the good he doth to others, as if they themselves had done it, or as if God would not have done it without their Prayers, puts them upon praying for those Mercies for others, which he will do howsoever, *Isa.* 39. 18.

III. The third object of Faith are the *Promises*, and there are three kinds, some to Prayer, some of Prayer, some to the Person Praying. We are to act our Faith upon all, but for brevity sake (for I am forced to Contract) I shall answer but on Objection.

The poor Soul will say, *I do not believe I have any Interest in the Promises, therefore I cannot pray in Faith.*

I answer: To obtain the Mercies included in a promise, it is not required that we should believe our Interest in it, but the truth; not that God will perform to us, but to those to whom it belongs, though you do not believe it belongs to you, for the Promises made to Graces, are made to them that have them, not to them that believe; as for example, the promises made to Faith, are made to them that have Faith, though they believe not that they do believe; and that poor Souls doubt that God will never make good any promise to them, proceeds not from any doubt of Gods veracity or faithfulness, but of their own unworthiness and non-interest in them.

IV. The fourth and main Object of Faith which our Faith must eye in our Prayers, is *Christ*, in whom all the Promises are Yea and Amen; who hath reconciled the Person and Attributes of God; and concerning Christ we are to believe,

I. The great love God bears to Christ, which is doubtless greater than to the whole Creation; for to which of the Angels said he at any time,

Thou

Thou

Thou

Then art my beloved in whom I am well pleased? Gods Love to Christ is not only greater, but diffusive; for the Love that God bears to Christ is as the Oyl that was poured upon the head of *Aaron*, which ran down to the skirts of his Garments; so the love that God bears to Christ terminates not in the Person of Christ, but is communicated to all that are his. As *Haman*, to shew the great hatred he bore to *Mordecai*, would not bound his malice on the person of *Mordecai*, but would destroy the whole Nation: So God thought it too small a Testimony of his Love to Christ to be well pleased with Christ (for so he is with the Angels) but he is well pleased in Christ with the whole World, I mean all Nations. We must believe this, or we cannot expect any favour for his sake. His Love to Christ is so great, that his Love to Christ is greater than his hatred to Sinners; so that any Sinner may be reconciled and accepted through Christ. God came to reconcile God and Sinners, not God and Sin. As one who desires the King to be reconciled to such a Traitor, doth not desire him to be reconciled to the Treason, but to the Traitor.

II. We are to believe the fulness of Christ's satisfaction; and the greatness of the value and efficacy of the death of Christ; for if Justice be not satisfied, we have no Throne of Grace, but a Seat and Bar of Justice to come before. The Blood of Christ hath a pacifying, purifying, purchasing, perfuming, reconciling, satisfying, justifying virtue: It pacifies Gods Wrath, it reconciles and justifies our Persons, it purifies our Nature, it perfumes our Duties, it purchaseeth our Inheritance.

III. We are to believe the efficacy and infallible success of Christs Intercession. The fulness of Christ Intercession is in this, that he doth three things for us, all that we stand in need of, according to what was Typified by the High-Priest, for he did three things.

1. He sprinkled the blood upon the Mercy-seat, hereby an atonement was made as to our sins, they being pardoned.

2. He went in with Incense, hereby our duties were perfumed; for God is said to inhabit the Praises of his People, and to dwell in thick darkness, i.e. in the thick smoke of the Incense.

3. He had the names of the Tribes engraven on his breast or heart. Christ pleads the love he bears to his People. Three places the names of the Saints are written in, out of either whereof nor Men nor Devils can blot them out, viz. in the Book of Life, on the palms of his hands, and on the heart of Christ. I may add the fourth thing the High-Priest did when he entered into the Holy Place, viz. he went in with

with all his rich Priestly Garments, to shew we should be clothed with the rich Robes of Christs Righteousness, for what the High-Priest did, he did not in his personal, but in his publick capacity. Now the Efficacy of his Intercession was not only from the wonderful Love God bore to Christ, from the unparalleled Interest Christ had in the Father; by these means we may expect all acts of favour, but we have Justice on our side; for favour is an arbitrary thing, therefore Christ is our Advocate, 1 *John* 2. 1, 2. he presents our case not by way of petition, but by way of pleading: for Advocates do not petition but plead.

So then Christ doth four things as to our Prayers. 1. He endites them by his Spirit, he perfumes them by his Merit, then he Presents our Prayers and Persons; for we have access through him, *Eph.* 3. 12. and then superadds his own Intercession, his Blood crying louder than our sins, and better things than our Prayers.

IV. We are to believe and improve this Truth, *viz.* That the Father exceedingly delights to honour Christ, and hereby God wonderfully honours Christ, by pardoning and receiving into favour such rebellious sinners as we are for his sake, by forgiving any thing for his sake. A sinner cannot please God better, than by coming with confidence for pardon for his sake. If we come for pardon or Mercies, and our Confidence ariseth from our low thoughts of the number or sinfulness of our sins, or of Gods hatred of sin, or our ability to satisfy Justice or deserve Mercy, our Confidence is desperate Impudence and Arrogance; but if purely from the high esteem we have of the incomprehensibleness of Christ Satisfaction, and of Christs Interest in Gods Love, and of the Fathers delight to honour Christ; such Confidence is precious and acceptable with God, and whosoever hath it, may go with as much freedom and assurance of favour, as if he had never sinned; with as much as *Adam* in his Innocency, or the Angels in Glory. Alas we do not believe or not improve these Truths, for if we did, we might have any thing, for Christ hath Interest enough in God to bear us out, and procure any Mercy.

V. We are to believe, improve, and obey Christs Command, *viz.* in *John* 14. 13, 14, 16, 23. the former truths give us great hope, but this strong Consolation, for though such a great person had never so much interest in some other great Person, with whom we had to do, yet without a Commission from him we might not go in his Name; but Christ hath not only given us leave, but a Command; and now it is not an arbitrary thing, we may do or not do, but we must do. This is the Incomprehensible Goodness of God, that what is for our good he commands.

mands us, that not only we may be put on the more to obtain what is good for us, but that it may be an act of obedience, and so we may be rewarded for procuring our own happiness.

So much for the things we are to believe, now for the manner of believing.

1. We are to believe these things of God and Christ with an Historical Faith.

2. With a Faith of Recumbency, we are to rely upon the Power, Wisdom and Goodness of God, and upon Christs Interest in God, &c.

3. Saints are by way of duty, but not by way of a necessary Condition of obtaining whatsoever they ask, to believe with the Faith of assurance of obtaining whatsoever we pray for. By Faith here in the Text is not meant, that we must without any doubt or wavering believe that we shall receive in kind whatsoever we ask, even the very thing we pray for.

1. The Leper was cured, though prayed with an *if thou wilt*.

2. Those in discretion should put up no acceptable Prayers, since they have not Faith of assurance of obtaining.

3. Christ when he comes at the day of Judgment, he shall not find this Faith on the Earth, *Luke 18.8.* and yet *vers. 7.* it is said, God will hear those Prayers.

4. The Apostle forbids this Faith, *vers. 7.* therefore it is not the Faith here commanded, for then it should run thus, You must believe you shall receive the thing you ask for, but if you do not, you must not. Many more arguments may be brought to prove this, but these shall suffice, besides what shall be said in the positive handling this Question, *viz. What Faith is required as to our believing absolutely and undoubtedly in kind the very thing we ask:* which I shall answer in several Propositions.

I. When we ask Temporal blessings as we ought, we are bound to believe we shall receive them as we ask them; for our Prayers for Temporal things should be spiritual as to the end, and moderate as to their measure, and conditional as to their effect upon us, *i. e.* if it be for our good. Now since our desires are to be Conditional, and Gods Promises of Temporals are Conditional, we must not absolutely believe we shall receive what we ask: a Conditional Promise cannot be a foundation for an absolute Faith,

II. Our Faith and Confidence of obtaining the thing we ask, should proceed *pari passu*, should be as strong to the event as it is to the Conditions. If we are very confident what we ask is for the glory of God, or

our

our good, we must be as confident that we shall have it; for as we are to put no Condition to absolute Promises, since God hath put none; so we are to add no more Conditions to Conditional Promises than God hath put, and upon those Conditions we are as fully to rely upon Gods performance, as upon his performance of absolute Promises.

III. Though we cannot nor ought nor certainly to believe the obtaining the thing we ask, if it be Temporal, by vertue of the promise; yet by virtue of an immediate assurance God may give us of receiving the very thing we ask, we may, and indeed cannot chuse but expect it. We read of Gods dealing so with several of his Saints (with Mr. Fox, and many others.)

IV. As for spiritual blessings, they are of four sorts, 1. Of Edification, as gifts, such as speaking with Tongues, and Prophecy in the Primitive Church, and the gifts of Preaching and Praying now. Or,

2. Of Consolation, as Assurance, and the Comforts of the Spirit, the Priviledges of the Kingdom of God, as Peace and Joy in Believing.

3. Of Sanctification, as Grace and Glory. For the former, the same rules as belong to Temporals belong to these: but for saving Grace; as our Prayers ought not to be Conditional, since we are sure it is for our good, and the glory of God for us to be holy; so our Faith ought not to be conditional, but absolute and particular, that God will give us Grace and Glory, if we sincerely and fervently ask it.

4. Yet though I should believe that God certainly will give Grace, nay, and all other things, if good for me; yet my not believing that God will give me Grace, doth not null mine interest in the Promise, but only my Comfort; nor shall it hinder Gods performance, though it hinders our expectation of receiving.

V. Though we are not absolutely to believe we shall receive Temporal blessings, or those of Consolation or Edification; yet that we do not more confidently expect the Performance of such Prayers in kind, proceeds generally from our not believing and improving the Power and Goodness of God, and the great Interest Christ hath in God, and the rest that I have spoken of; for generally we are more confident that the thing we pray for is good for us, than we are that we shall have it.

VI. We may be confident that the restoring of our selves or our relations to health; or deliverance of them out of danger, is for our good; as they in our Saviours time, who prayed to him for these mercies, were.

VII. As

VII. As the case stands between Justifying Faith and Assurance, so the case stands as to our receiving, and our expecting the answer of our Prayers in kind.

1. As we may and shall have all the Promises that are made to Faith made good to us, though we do not believe that we have Faith, and by consequence do not believe they shall have them made good to us; so when we pray for those things God hath promised to those who love or fear God, or walk uprightly, though we do not believe we have that fear or love, or that we walk uprightly, if we have those Graces, we shall receive the Promises made to them.

2. As there are two kinds of Assurance, one which comes from the Testimony of our own Spirits, when, upon serious examination of our selves, we find that we do believe; the other, which comes from the Testimony of the Spirit of God, witnessing with our Spirits: So there are two kinds of Assurance of receiving the thing we ask, one which proceeds from our believing, and improving our believing the Power and Goodness of God, and Christ's Interest in God, and God's delighting to honour Christ, by giving the Mercies we ask in his Name; the other, from God's immediate assuring us that we shall receive the very mercy we pray for.

3. As the immediate Testimony of the Spirit comes with more evidence than the Testimony of our own Spirits, so the immediate assurance that God gives, that we shall receive the things we pray for, is clearer and fuller, than that which we have by our relying upon the Power and Goodness of God; or, to speak more properly, we do more fully rely upon the Goodness and Power of God, when God doth immediately enable us so to do, than when we work out this Confidence by our own endeavours, assisted by the ordinary concurrence of the Spirit.

4. As it is not our sin to want the immediate Testimony of the Spirit,* so it is not our sin not to have this particular assurance of receiving what we ask. These Parallels may be far more enlarged, and will hold, as I think, in all particulars.

The Use of this is; 1. For Consolation, to all that love and fear God; for thy not believing God will grant thy Prayers, shall not hinder thy Prayers from being accepted and granted; for although if thine unbelief were built upon thy not believing God's power or goodness to do what thou prayest for would hinder thee, yet since thy Diffidence proceeds from thy not believing that thou art such an one as the Promises are made to, such thine unbelief shall not make the Promise of

God of no effect, *2 Tim. 2. 13.* In the 11 and 12 *verses*, the Apostle saith, *If we are dead with Christ.* (not if we believe we are dead with Christ) *we shall live; though we do not believe we are dead, if we are dead it shall not hinder: for if we believe not, God is faithful,* *2 Tim. 2. 13.* For suppose one dies and leaves such an one a Legacy, though he to whom the Legacy is left doth not know of any such Legacy, yet the Executor will not therefore not give him the Legacy; nay, though he will hardly believe it when he tells him, yet he will keep it and give it him; so the Legacies that Christ hath left to the Saints, though they little think any such Legacies are left by Christ to them, yet their ignorance shall not frustrate Christs Love; nay, though they will not for the present extend their hand of Faith to receive it, yet God will, and doth keep Mercy for thousands, until they will receive it, *Exod. 34. 7.*

II. The second Use, is an Use of Exhortation. 1. Put in thy Claim for Mercy, for thy Claim will hold, not according to thy sense, knowledge, or belief, that thou hast an Interest, but according to the Truth of thine Interest. Suppose thou shouldst promise to give to every one of thy Children such a gift if they were good Children. Suppose one of your Children who had obeyed your commands, and had been very inquisitive to know your Will; I say, suppose such a Child should sit weeping because he thought he had not obeyed your commands, and because he thought you were angry with him, and upon that account would not come for your promised gift; would you not therefore give it him? nay would you not onely be pleased with his obedience, but that he took so to heart your supposed anger? So, O poor Soul, that sittest weeping with thine eyes full of tears, and thine heart full of sorrow, under the sense of Gods supposed displeasure, shall not God *wipe all tears from thine eyes*, and give thee the Promises he hath made to thee, though thou, through the sense of thy unworthiness, dost not believe thou hast any interest in them?

2. The second advice is, That thou shouldst endeavour to obtain the Graces to which the Promises are made, *viz. Fear and love of God, and uprightness of heart, &c.* whilst others are examining, and going from Minister to Minister to know whether they have those Graces, be thou getting of them. For,

1. Thou shalt be sure to get an interest in the Promises, for they are made to such as have the Graces, not to those that know that they have those Graces; and if thou hast a Title, thou shalt have possession.

2. By getting greater degrees of Graces, the trouble of examination

tion will be needless, it will save thee that labour, whereas otherwise thou wilt perpetually be put to examination: As for instance; Thou findest a spark of fire, and coverest it up again, and lettest it lie wet, to morrow thou wilt be as far to seek, and wilt as hardly find the spark, and know whether there be any fire to morrow as to day. Another, knowing where to have fire close by, knows she can as soon fetch it from her Neighbour, as find it on her own Hearth, if there be but a spark or two, she therefore fetches some, and blows up into a flame, and she layes on fuel to keep in the fire; So thou knowest where thou mayest have Gods love, viz. from God, who is near unto them that call upon him, they know they may have it sooner by Prayer, than find it by examination; this they blow into a flame: And as when the fire flames, we may be sure there is fire without poring to find it; So when thy Graces are in an eminent degree, they are so apparent, that one that hath but half an eye may see them.

3. By getting the Conditions to which the Promise is made, thou shalt often get what is better than the Promise it self; for the Promise is often Temporal, when the Condition is Spiritual.

III. Study much, or rather meditate much upon these great Gospel Mysteries of Christs Satisfaction, of Christs interest in the Fathers Love, and of the Fathers delight to honour the Son, by giving Mercies, and pardoning sinners for his sake. Know that thou greatly dishonourest Christ when thou goest timorously to God for any Mercy in his Name, and it greatly argues thine infidelity: Suppose thy Friend that was bound with thee for some great sum of Money, and he hearing there were Sergeants to arrest thee, should put himself into their hands to save thee from Prison, and he should be carried to Prison, and pay the Debt, and send thee word that he had paid the Debt every farthing, if thou shouldest notwithstanding be afraid to see thy Creditor, or stir abroad, would it not argue that thou believedst not thy Friend had paid the Debt?

IV. Go then with Confidence to God, in the Name of Christ, since Christ hath bid thee, or else thou hast strange thoughts of Christ.

Suppose a Friend of yours should bid you go to such a great man for such a Courtsey, and should tell thee that he had spoken to him in thy behalf, and bid thee not fear, for he could have any thing of him that he spoke to him for, and should bid thee go to him in his Name, and tell him he sent thee; if thou shouldest stand considering what to do, and shouldest fear, that for all thy Friend professed, he had so great an Interest in that great man, you should not find it so when you came to

him, would not this show, that you feared your Friend boasted of more Interest than he had?

Christ hath plainly bid us go to the Father in his Name from him, and that we shall have any thing whatsoever; if we doubt whether, when we go to the Father in his Name, we shall obtain, doth it not plainly argue our low thoughts of Christs Interest in the Fathers Love, and that Christ hath higher thoughts of his Interest in his Fathers love than indeed he hath. The sense of thine own unworthiness should by no means hinder thee, except thou wentest to God in thine own name; for the Question in this Case, is not how God loves thee, but how God loves Christ? Thou hast thoughts high enough of God's Love to Christ, if thou knowest that God loves Christ more than he hates any sinner in the World. Thy thoughts are not high enough of Christs Love to thee, if thou thinkest Christ will deny thee any thing; nor hast thou worthy thoughts of God's Love to Christ, if thou thinkest God will deny Christ any thing, or any one that comes to him in his Name, whom he bids so to do; for in so doing, he doth not so properly deny thee, as Christ.

Of



Of the Cause of Inward Trouble, and how a Christian should behave himself when Inward and Outward Troubles meet.



Gen. 42. v. 21, 22.

21. *And they said one to another, (yea but) verily we are guilty concerning our Brother, in that we saw the anguish of his Soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us.*

22. *And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not to you, saying, Sin not against the Child, and ye would not hear? therefore behold also, his blood is required.*



THIS Chapter we have the Description of our Fathers, the Patriarchs: their first journey into *Egypt* for Corn, to relieve their Famine in *Canaan*.

Herein is considerable, 1. Their entertainment there; it was harsh, with much trouble, more danger; the great Lord-Treasurer of *Egypt* would not know them, but treats them roughly, *vers. 7.* takes them for Spies, *vers. 9.* rejects their defence, *vers. 12.* renews, and out of their own mouths reinforceth his Charge, and suspicion of them, *vers. 14.* threatens to commit them, *vers. 15, 16.* commits them, *vers. 17.* puts Bonds upon one of them, till the rest should quit and clear themselves and him of suspicion, *vers. 19, 20.* This is their cold and sad well-come and entertainment.

2. The

2. The consequent of this their hard and distressful usage and entertainment, and that is trouble of mind, horror and perplexity of spirit, *And they said one to another, &c.*

The words then are the holy Ghosts Report of the Case of the Sons of Jacob, their being spiritually troubled, by way of Conviction, or Judgement in their own (which also is the Lords) Court of Conscience.

Wherein we observe the

I. Actors	Registers Accusers Witnesses Judge Tormentors	themselves.
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II. Process in judging themselves; Wherein,

1. Self-accusation of the cause of their trouble; their sin, with the utmost aggravations, *viz.*

1. In general, *We are guilty.*

2. In particular, Of Envy, Wrong against a Brother; whom in bitterness we saw without pity, and were deaf to his intreaties; Obdurate to the admonition of *Reuben*, and abiding therein.

3. In self-condemnation, *Therefore is this distress come*, and his blood required.

III. Execution; Wherein,

1. The smart, by inward terror and consternation, their heart misgiving them, is deeply affected, and that makes them very abrupt, *Yea verily, i. e.* Alas! what shall we do?

2. The circumstance of the time, when couched in. And,

1. In general, Many years after the offence was done.

2. In special, Now that they were outwardly in an afflicted condition.

Doct. 1. Every Man hath a Conscience within himself.

1. The guilt of sin turns a mans Conscience, i. e. himself against himself.

3. Conscience as apt to be very sensible, when it is awakened, not only of sin, but particular sins, and the particular circumstances and degrees thereof to the utmost, and charge all upon a mans self, not upon Gods Decree or Providence, nor upon the Devil or evil Company, &c.

4. Envy, unnatural affection, cruelty, deafness to the intreaties of the distressed, obstinacy against Warning and Admonition, continuance in sin without repentance, &c. are very heinous and dangerous.

5. The

5. The Accusations and Condemnation of Conscience are terrible, or cause terror beyond all expression.

6. There is a time when God will call over sins that are past, and charge them upon the Conscience.

7. Inward trouble of mind sometimes, yea, usually comes upon the People of God, when they are outwardly in some distress.

I shall speak of the two last, and in them something of all the other, saving the fourth, containing the particular matter of Fact, viz. Cruelty and Blood, which I shall not meddle withal.

These are then the two Doctrines:

1. There is a time when God will call over past sins with horror, &c.
2. This time of inward horror falls in with outward trouble.

Doct. 1. There is a time when God will call over sins that are past, without repentance, and charge them upon the Conscience with horror.

Here's the Case; The Sons of Jacob had formerly trespassed against God in the matter of their Brother, And they said, &c. now, and not till now that we read of, is the guilt & horror of it reflected upon their Consciences. In sin, the act passes, the guilt and consequent remains.

Sin is like some poison, which may be taken at one time, and work at another, it may be seven years after: 'Twas now more than seven and seven years, that the poison of this sin began to work.

'Tis true of { Family sins, *Hos. 1. 4.*
 National sins, *Ezek. 4. 4, 5. Lam. 5. 7.*
 Personal sins, as here: And that's the Case.

1. Not only of the wicked, as in the Case of Cain, *Gen. 4. 7.* If thou dost ill, sin lies at the door, to shut out Mercies, and let in Judgements; and that as a fell Mastiff, or a sleeping Lion, ready to take thee by the Throat, whenever the Lord awakens guilt in the Conscience.

2. But also of the Godly, *Psal. 19. 12. & 25. 7. Job 13. 26.* Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth.

Reas. 1. From God.

Reas. 11.

1. God remembers all, *Amos 8. 7.* As I live, saith the Lord, I will forget none of their works. 1 Sam. 15. 2. I remember what Amaleck did, &c. God hath three Books;

1. Of Prescience, wherein he writes down our Names, and his purposes concerning us. The Arminians deny that Book.

2. Of Providence, wherein he writes down our Names, and all his care over us. The Epicure and Atheist deny this, as also the former.

3. Of

3. Of *Posſcience* or *remembrance*, wherein he writes down our Names, and all the particulars of our carriage towards him.

1. Whether they be good; no act of Piety or Charity, not a cup of cold water from the Spring of Love, not a drop of tears from the Spring of Godly sorrow, not a sigh from the bottom of a broken heart, but it's taken notice of, botled, recorded, *Mal. 3. 16.* Or,

2. Bad; not a wicked thought, a malicious scoff, or wicked action, word, motion, but God marks it, and sets it down in the Book of his Remembrance. *Pſal. 50. 21.*

Reas. 2.

2. God need not reflect, or look back, for he hath all things present before him, that ever were, are, or are to come, *viz.*

1. In *Speculo decreti.*

2. In *Causis particularibus.*

Gods Knowledge, (called fore-knowledge, and remembrance, in respect of us, and the things known) is as his being, altogether in *plurilo eternitatis*. There is not in God first and second of time, and cause; no *was* and *is* to come, but all *is*. There is not with God beginning, succession, and end, but his Name is *I am*, and so is knowledge as himself, *yesterday, to day, and the same for ever*, 2 Pet. 3. 8. The knowledge of men, is as of one standing on the shore, where some Ships are past, and out of sight one way, others to come, and out of sight another way, others in sight right over against him; but the Knowledge of God, is of one on the top of an high Mountain, where with one view, *all things are present*, Heb. 4. 13.

Reas. 3.

3. God also seals up our iniquities as in a bag, *Job 14. 17.* as the Clerk of the Sizes seals up the Indictments for the next Circuit; nay God himself will bag them, and seal them up with his own hand & signet. *Deut. 32. 34.* God speaking of the provocations of his People, saith, *Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed among my treasure?* So strict and earnest is God for security, as we say, *Sure bind, sure find*. What more sure and safe, than that which God himself layes up in Bag and Cabinet, and Seals among his Jewels? As when God makes up his Jewels of Mercy, he will remember them, *Mal. 3. 17.* So when he calls up his Treasures of Wrath, he will remember them.

Reas. 4.

4. God's Truth engages him in this case, his Word cannot pass away, now he hath said it, *Exod. 24. 7.* he will by no means acquit the guilty, (*i. e.* Unless the blood of sprinkling for repentance and remission be applyed) it's said again, *Pſal. 68. 21.* I will wound the head; and again, *Isa. 65. 20.* *The sinner an hundred years old is accursed.*

Now as the Godly look to have God as good as his word for good.

good, so the wicked must look to have God as good as his word for Zach. 1. 6. evil, *Did not my word take hold of your Fathers?*

5. No time can remit God's anger; if you offend a man, and he be angry, you may get out of the way, and time will wear off the memory of the offence, or at least assuage his passion; but 'tis not so with God, for it he be once angry, he is for ever angry, the same cause, which is sin unrepented, remaining. *Psal. 7. 11. God is angry with the wicked every day*, for the sins he commits one day; the anger of the Lord, unless he works a change in us, abides upon us, burning to the bottom of Hell. *Psal. 90. 11. O! as his fear is, so is his wrath*, and a thousand times more.

6. Lastly, The sinner is as much under the Power of God at one time, as at another, forty, a hundred, a thousand years after a sin is committed, as when the sin was first done.

As the People of God are born up with that word, *Behold, the hand of the Lord is not shortened that he cannot save*, Isa. 59. 1. So the wicked sink under the terror of that word, *Ezek. 22. 14. Can thy heart hold, and thine hands be strong when I shall visit, when I shall deal with you?* saith the Lord.

This is the first Reason From God.

Reas. 2. From sin. In a two-fold consideration of every sin, wherein there are two things which make sin unrepented, sure to be called back.

1. There is in every sin, a breach of the eternal Rule of Righteousness. 1 *John 3. 4.* Now the breach of an Eternal Law, must needs be Eternal, unless he which is Eternal, make it up (*i. e.* Christ in giving Repentance and Remission) make a breach in a stone-Wall; you may come many years after and find it as you left it, and it must hold as long as the Wall holds, if it be not made up; even so it is in this case. Let one come from the dead and warn us, those poor cursed Castaways are still, and must be still, and ever, crying out under the Wrath of God. What is the reason, I pray? Verily, not only because they sinned out of an affection and spring to sin for ever, but also because every sin is objectively infinite and eternal, being against the Infinite Eternal Law of the Eternal God; now the Law being wronged by the sinner, demands and solicits the Justice and Vengeance of God against him, till it be satisfied to the utmost farthing; therefore till then (*i. e.* for ever) must the wrath of God abide upon him; and if time wears not out the breach of the Eternal Law in Hell, much less doth it make any alteration therein here, while thou doublest and treblest thy sin, by going on with an impenitent heart.

Y y

2. There

Reas. 2. 2. There is also in every sin, a spot, stain, or brand, whereby the sinner is marked out for Judgment and condemnation; as we say of a Murderer, as to man, so we may say of every sin (which is hated, and so murder of the Blessed God) as to God, there is alwayes some mark or token whereby he is known; and that is the *macula*, which sin doth impress upon him; now this also is an indelible Character, as the former of guilt was, (save only when upon the penitent heart changing application of the blood of sprinkling, there is made an alteration of the case). It is plain, *Jer.* 17. 1. *It is written with a Pen of Iron, and the point of a Diamond.* *Jer.* 2. 22. *Though thou take thee much Nitre, and wash thee with much Sope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord.* David cries out so, *Psal.* 51. *O wash me, purge me I'bcc.* This is the second reason from sin.

The third is from the sinner himself, i. e. from his own Conscience.

There is in every rational Creature, a certain thing called *Conscience*; upon the account of which also, sin must needs be kept upon the File for a back-blow. Know here that,

There are divers acts of Conscience, and all of them unavoidable.

1. *Directive*, as to that which is to be done, it being the Law written in the heart, it points to all the duties & sins, whereby that Law is kept or broken; warning from the one, and putting on to the other. *Gen.* 39. 9. *How shall I do this, and sin?* &c. *Pl.* 119. 59. *I considered my ways, and turned my feet into thy testimonies.* Thus Conscience is a Monitor.

2. *Reflexive*, both *gratulatory* and *reprehensive*, as to all that which is doing or done.

1. Considering, observing, and recording, whether it be done or no; the matter of fact simply, with the natural circumstances of action, Negative and Positive, both in the point of Omission and Commission. *Item*, this is done, or not done.

2. Taking notice, and recording the quality of the Fact in a comparative act; comparing it with the Rule, together with the moral Circumstances thereof: Thus Conscience is a Surveyor, Witness, Register. *Item*, In the doing or omitting of this and this, the Law is broken, and the forfeiture and penalty is incurred.

3. It applies this, and sets it home upon the sinner, thou art the Man. This thou hast done, verily thou art guilty, &c. Thus Conscience is a Judge also, and gives Sentence touching both the sin and sinner, *pro* or *con*, as the case is.

4. It never leaves, nor gives over these acts of warning, observing, record-

recording, witnessing and judging, till judgment take place, and the Law and Sentence be fulfilled upon the sinner. Verily, I am guilty, &c. Thus Conscience is Tormentor and Executioner also, executing its own Sentence, by affecting the heart, and moving the affections, as of joy and boldness, if the Case be good; so of horror and fear, shame and sorrow, if the Case be bad, &c.

Now these acts of Conscience, though haply for a time suspended, as it were, are unavoidable, upon a double account: And Conscience cannot be bribed.

1. Because of that relation that Conscience hath to God; it ever takes God's part, and God it's; it is God's Deputy, and Viceroy; and so its Voice and Judgment, is the very Voice and Judgment of God himself; who can and will maintain it in its office, till he brings forth Judgment unto Victory.

2. Because of its relation to a mans self; it is, *Sensus & prejudicium Judicii Divini*. Nothing so intimate to a man, and inseparable from life, as this Bosom-Judge, and God's Court within a man, 'tis a part of a mans Soul and self, as subordinate to God and his Judgement; So that if a man can run away from God, or himself, then he may escape the reflection of his sin upon him; but if not, then know, it must be an evil and bitter thing, that thou hast departed from God in any known sin, either to thy penitent amendment, or penal condemnation and confusion, and that upon all accounts. 1. In respect of God. 2. Of Sin. 3. Of the sinner himself. *Jer. 2. 19. Thine own wickedness shall reprove thee; thine own iniquity shall correct thee:* All the time thou abidest in sin, thou art gathering either Hemlock to poyson thee, or Wormwood to make thy life bitter.

1. Instruction: 1. See then the malignity and danger of sin. Fools make a mock of sin.

2. See the vanity, sinfulness, and desperate danger of presuming upon any bottom of peace and satisfaction, or security, whilst sin remains: Of a truth, thy peace and hope thereof, shall be as a Spiders Web, and as the giving up of the Ghost; and thy presumption must end in despair. Bribeest thou thy self with a perswasion of peace, presuming and leaning,

1. Upon Gods Patience? Remember, forbearance is no payment, or forgiveness, nor sign thereof.

2. Upon outward Priviledges? *Matth. 7. 21.* God knows thee not, whilst thou art a worker of iniquity.

3. Upon the Mercy of God? He is Holy, and therefore must be

Y y 2

Just;

Use 1.

just; and because just, angry; and because angry, ever angry, unless Christ be thy Peace upon Faith, and a through change.

4. The Blood of Christ? though it be an Ocean, yet not a drop of it can do thee good, unless it turn thee from all thine iniquity, *Acts* 3, 21. all this is but Physick in thy Pocket.

5. The Promises of the Gospel? They are sweet, but Poyson to the impenitent? as Bread to a dying man.

6. Upon thy Faith in all this? whilst impenitent, all's but notional and imaginary, and so thy peace and happiness is but a notion.

Use 2.

2. Therefore be exhorted to get thy sin off.

I shall here do two things, 1. Give you some directions how to put you in the way to escape this doom. 2. To awaken my self and you to the serious use of them by some Motives.

1. Then if you ask how? I answer,

Direct. 1.

1. Attend to, and comply with, the Word and Spirit therein, in summoning thy self to God's and thine own Bar of Conscience; suffer thy self to be stopt, as a loose and sculking Malefactor; seize and sequester thy self to hearken to the Call and Treaty of the Word about thy condition; the *Hue and Cry* of the Word is after thee to apprehend thee.

Direct. 2.

2. Let inquisition and diligent search be made into the matters between God and thy Soul; This is the way, *Lam.* 3, 20. *Let us search our ways, and turn,* &c. this the miscarriage, *Jer.* 8, 6. *No man considered, and said, what have I done.* The first step to Peace with God, is Enquiry, *Isa.* 21, 12. *If ye will enquire, Enquire, Return, Come.*

Direct. 3.

3. Declare against thy self, turn God's faithful Pleader against thy own Soul; accuse thy self in free and particular confession, whereof thou art guilty, with all the killing Circumstances thou canst find out. This will prevent the Accuser of the Brethren.

Direct. 4.

4. Condemn thy self, charge thy self with Fault, Guilt, Punishment, *Lev.* 26, 41. *So shalt thou prevent the Condemnation of the Lord,* though thou canst not satisfy the Justice of God in the least, yet thou must glorify it to the utmost thou canst.

1 Cor. ii. 31.

Direct. 5.

5. Be thorow, and to purpose, and constant herein; for if thy sense of thy condition be not real, thy cure will not be real; there will be no more reality in the application of the Word for the one, than there is for the other; to no more purpose wilt thou apply the Word to thy self, than thou applyest thy self to the Word; therefore give thy self to it, to dwell upon thy Case; hold the Object close to the Faculty, till it make some impression, and thy heart yeeld.

6. Fly

6. Fly to the Lord Jesus, and the Mercy-seat in his Blood, 1. For *Direct.* 6.
Repentance. 2. For remission. He is exalted to give both, *Acts* 5. 31.
None can take up the quarrel between God and thee, save onely Christ 1 Sam. 2. 25;
aloné; he, he is the Way; God's way to thee for Grace and Mercy,
and thy way to God for Faith. Lord, I am a guilty helpless Creature,
but thou hast laid help upon one that is mighty to save, from the ut-
most to the utmost.

7. In him therefore cry to God for Mercy and Grace with thy whole *Direct.* 7.
heart, O mercy, mercy Lord; I have wronged thee, Lord forgive me; *Psal.* 51.
I have defiled my Soul, Lord wash me; I have wounded and cast a-
way my Soul, Lord heal me, Lord save me, &c.

8. Cry for Mercy, till God have mercy upon thee, *Psal.* 123. 2, 3, *Direct.* 8.
Take heed thou be not temporary for a fit, but set thy self in an habi-
tual tenour, restless after Interest in Christ, and the great Work, till it
be done.

9. Accept of Christ upon the terms of the Gospel, not thine own, or *Direct.* 9.
picking and chusing, but as he; *Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?* *Acts* 9. 6.
Consent and resign thy self, stooping to his Articles of Peace; to deny
thy self of the dearest, bear the heaviest, do the strictest, as he shall
call; nor that thou canst do any thing, but upon these terms; If he
will receive thee, and furnish thee with Grace, thou wilt follow, and
cleave to him with full purpose of heart.

10. Cashier and discharge in thy purpose, and endeavour in de- *Direct.* 10.
pendance on this Christ in the Promise, what-ever thou knowest offends
in heart and life, what-ever belongs to a carnal mind, which is enmity
to God, and addist thy self to the pleasure of God in all known com-
mands; and what-ever favours of the Spirit, and the Kingdom of
God.

11. Upon these terms, consenting to imbrace Christ in the offer of *Direct.* 11.
Grace, rest upon Christ, who is assuredly thine, and will never be o-
therwise.

2. The Motives, 1. The comfort of this way. 1. *Now then there is* *Motive* 1;
no condemnation to them that are in Christ, &c. their iniquities shall ne- *Rom.* 8. 14
ver be remembered: God sees no iniquity in *Jacob*, there's no fury in *Psal.* 32.
God. O! blessed is the man to whom God imputes not his sin, &c. Now
Christ is *Jehova*, thy Righteousness. Thy Judge is thy Advocate, thy
God reconciled. Thy Comforter is come to apply Christ in all that
he is for thee, to thee, and shall abide for ever with thee; he is thy Seal
unto the purchased Possession, the Law is satisfied, the Curse is remo-
ved, all the Promises thine, and the Spirit of Promise to confirm thy
title

title shine, the stain or mark of sin washed off quite, as to Justification and present Acceptation; and in part begun as to Sanctification and purity of heart and life. Thy Conscience is pacified with the blood of sprinkling, as to what the Word declares concerning thee, though not as to what thou feelest; and where the Judge acquits, there Conscience, which is the Sergeant, cannot condemn; but that 'tis not alwayes set right according to the Word.

Motive 2.
The terror of
being yet,
and going on
in sin.

*Sic mihi sem-
per contingat
trahere & be-
at amicos, non
dulcibus ver-
bis, sed sanis
terroribus.
Bern.*

2. But oh! the terror of hating sin upon the file against us; and dost thou remain in sin unrepented? Dost thou go on to add sin to sin, not caring how many sins thou loadest thy Conscience withal, as if there were no time of reckoning? Numb. 32. 23. *Be ye sure your sins will find you out.*

Do not say, *Hast thou found me, O my enemy?* Or as the wicked one, *Art thou come to torment us before our time?* But as thou lovest thy Soul, take all I say in good part, for God knows I speak out of tender respect to your eternal good. Consider then,

1. The innumerable number of sins thou standest guilty of, *Psal. 19. 12. Who knows the errors of his life?* Methinks there is no last sight in the World but the sinner in his sins.

Suppose you had seen *Herod* covered over with Worms; alas what is this to one Worm of Conscience?

Suppose you had seen every Member in the Senate run upon *Cesar* to give him a stab, would not you have given him over for dead a thousand times? Brethren, every sin you commit, is an envenomed Knife to stab you at your very heart.

Suppose, again, you should see a Malefactor at the Bar for a Capital Crime, the Evidence clear, O! you will say, 'Twill go hard with him; but when you see another, and another, and many other Indictments sworn home against him, and every one touching his life, will you not say, There is no hope, he is a dead man, and all the World cannot save him? Remember, this is thy case, and it will be certainly called over.

If one Poyson be enough to dispatch a man without an Antidote, what doth that man mean, that drinks off a thousand Poysons, and refuses the Antidote of the Blood of Christ?

If one sin be as a thousand Mill-stones to sink all the World into the bottom of Hell, what dost thou mean to tie so many thousand Mill-stones about thy own neck?

2. Old Debts vex most, the delay of payment increases them by Use upon Use; and the return of them being unexpected, a person is least provided for them. We count old Sores, breaking forth, incurable. *Augu-*

gustinus

gossus wondered at a persons sleeping quietly that was very much in debt, and sent for his Pillow, saying, *Surely there is some strange virtue in it, that maketh him rest so secure.* My Brethren, if one Debt unto God's Law be more than the whole Creation can satisfy, what do any of us mean to rest secure with so vast a burden upon our Consciences and account? O! take heed thou beest not surprized and arrested with old Debts. O! *thou remembrest former iniquities against us.* Psal. 79.8.

3. God will call over, and charge thy sins upon thee, when all the sweet is gone; Thou makest a shift to swallow the Hook with pleasure, when 'tis covered with the sweet Bait; O! but when that's digested, or disgorged, and the naked Hook piercing and raking thy heart, what wilt thou do then? O! how bitter is the Pill when all the Sugar is melted off. Now this will be thy case; Job found but a taste of it, and O! how he cries out, Job 13.26. *Thou writest bitter things against me, i.e. bitterness.*

4. With old sins must come old wrath. Rom. 2.4, 5. *Thinkest thou that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? What, and despisest the riches of his goodness and forbearance, not knowing that the goodness of God (doth not only give thee a space of, but) leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest (tunnest) up against thyself, wrath against the day of wrath, &c.*

There be three sorts and degrees of Wrath will come with old sins;

1. Wrath for old sins.
2. Wrath for the forbearance of that Wrath.
3. Wrath for the abuse of that forbearance: O! what wilt thou do in the day of thy visitation?
5. The former admonitions, &c. nips of Conscience, will come again, and they with the present will be unsufferable, beyond all that can be expressed: This is their terror here, say they, *He besought us, and we would not hear*; and saith *Reuben, Said I not to you, did I not tell you,* warn you what it would come to, and ye would not hear? O! he which hardens his neck to reproof, shall surely be destroyed. O! timely, and fair checks and warnings, obstinately rejected, are the wracks of Conscience, the sharp sting and teeth of the Worm thereof.

6. And what will now become of thee! as the Lord lives, thou wilt come to thy distracting, misgiving thoughts, *Tra, but, and verily we are guilty,* &c. Methinks, saith *Luther,* every cloud is lyn'd with thunder against me: Thou wilt take every visitation from God, as a Messenger of Death; nay, that God himself sets in against thy life. Suppose you saw two desperate enemies grappling, closing in upon each other; O! say

say you, they are armed with some instruments of death, they owe each other a deadly grudge; there is of old a mortal feud between them, they'll take this opportunity to vent their malice to the utmost, O! one of them will fall and die for it. My Brethren, God and the sinner in his sins, are according to the tenour of this Book, enemies, hated of, and hating one another; and when God visits sin upon him, he falls upon him, and deals with him, (as I may say) hand to hand, and now one of them must go to the Walls, God or the sinner must fall: Take it in Gods own Challenge, *Ezek. 21. 14.* In *vers. 13.* God complains the sinner had given him a blow; but then, saith God, Canst thou indeed make thy part good when I shall be in good earnest with thee? *Can thy heart hold out? can thine hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee?* O! consider and tremble at it, how God will thus deal with thee, and how infinitely, thou being a guilty worm, art over-matched by Omnipotency, whose wrath will one day wax hot against thee, even to the utmost. *Psal. 39. 11.* O! saith David, *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty,* even all his hopes and desires, *to consume away as a moth, &c.*

Sad was the case of the Children of Benjamin, of whom we read, *Judg. 20.* they had fought against their Brethren twice, and prevailed; they ventured out the third time, but then the Battle went against them, the Ambuscadoes cut them off, and others fired the Town behind them; O! the horror and amazement they were struck withal, when they could not stand before the face of the Tribes which were before them, and they saw their City all on a flame behind them; O! said they, *Now is evil befallen us, and they were troden down as dirt.* Thou wretch, which art still in thy sins, hast fought against God many & many times, and seemed to carry the day; but when God shall come upon thee in his strength, and thou shalt see all the refuge of Creature Comforts in despairing case, as on a fire behind thee, what reprobate astonishment will then take hold on thee? now comes thy distracting, misgiving, despairing thoughts! now evil is befallen me! now is God come upon me, and will make an end of me at once! now come the floods of my ungodliness in amain, and the flood-gates of Gods wrath are opened upon me; *Now the Arrows of the Almighty stick fast in me, and the poison thereof drink up my spirit, and the terrors of God set themselves in array against me,* *Job 6. 4.* and as the Church, *Lam. 2. 22.* Now hath God summoned (and mustered) as in a solemn day of battel between him and my poor soul, my terrors round about me! O! you that have been twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years, even ever since you were born, a provocation,

vocation, and yet also forget God: Consider these things before he fall Psal. 50. 22. upon you, and tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver; for assure your selves, there is a time when God will call over sins past, and charge them home upon the Conscience.

Q. But you will ask, *What is the sign, and when shall these things be?* Quest.

A. I answer: The God of Spirits can at any time, and will in his own time certainly fall upon thy Spirit with horreur and confusion; Deur. 32. especially and usually at these particular Instants:

1. After a certain term of Patience abused and expired. God is patient toward all men, and this patience is as the banks which keep in his wrath, that it breaks not in upon thee, but it will not be alwayes so; these banks have their bounds, and as thy sin abides, it rises with thee, and as Gods wrath abides on thee it rises with God, till at last it swells up to the bank of his patience. and then it is a thousand times more dreadful than the Sea to overwhelm thee. Gods Patience and thy respect hath its date, Gen. 6. 3. one hundred and twenty years, and then — So it may be so many years, or months, or weeks, or dayes to thee, and then — *Lasa patientia fit furor*; and as Lead, the colder, when Cold, the hotter when Hot.

*Tarditatem
vindictæ com-
pensat gravi-
tate supplicii.*
Amos 6. 3.
Mat. 24. 48, 50

2. When the sinner is secure; the less fear the more danger; the more thou putteth the evil day from thee, the nearer it is to thee, God shall cut thee off in an hour when thou art not aware; when thou sayest, *my Master delays his coming*. As the Flood came upon the old World, as * some say in the Spring, or Summer, when they would least have dreamed of it. God deals with a sinner, as Samuel with Agag; when he said, *Surely the bitterness of death is past*, then comes the messenger of death from the Lord to cut him in peices. 1 Thes 5. 3. *When the wicked cry Peace, peace* (nothing but peace) *then comes sudden destruction upon them, as travel upon a woman*, &c. Dost thou bless thy self in thy sins, as if thy condition were good, or thy account far off? *as the Lord lives there is but a step between thee and death*.

* Musculus in
Gen.

1 Sam. 1. 33,
33.

Deut 29. 19.

3. After the commission of some great sin; this like some great blow, which awakens the Conscience to see the whole account; as in Cain, Judas, &c. God deals with the Sinner, as Solomon with Shimei: he reviled his Father David, but David seems to forget it, and so did his Son Solomon, only he is bound by an Oath not to go out of Jerusalem; he breaks his Oath and goes out, Solomon upon this comes upon him for the breach of his Covenant and Oath; and also for former Rebellions, *And I remember*, saith he, *what thou didst to my Father David*.

1 King. 2. 34.

4. On thy death-bed (not to speak of Judgement when we must
Z z account

Gen. 3. 8.

account for every particular) God comes to the sinner (as to *Adam* in the cool of the day) in his cold sweat, when his Sun is setting, and he is going to make his bed in the dark; his Life and Soul sits on his pale trembling lips, ready to take her flight into Eternity, and whereas thou wert before, as the *deaf Adder*, or the *wild Ass snuffing up the wind*, or the *Dromedary traversing his way*, without all regard of any check, now, taken in thy mouth; Oh! my contempt of the means of Grace; Oh! my prophaning Sabbaths, Sacraments; Oh! my breaking bonds of Oaths, Covenants, Promises, and casting away Cords of Discipline and Government; Oh! my malice against Gods People; Oh! my hardening my heart against the Word and the Rod, &c. as the rankling thorn in the flesh pains most when thou goest to bed.

5. Before this, in a time of outward Calamity and Distress, and this is the second Doctrine from the special Circumstance, when they were troubled, *And now*.

Direct. 2.

2. This inward horror and trouble of mind falls in (even to Gods People) with outward Trouble.

This is the Case here, the Patriarchs (the Children of the Promise) are in distress and danger, by their Brother *Joseph's* seeming severity toward them. *And they said one to the other, We are verily guilty, &c.* with the pressure on the outward man, comes a snare upon the Conscience.

If any find it otherwise, (as there are some, with whom when there is a storm without, there is a calm within, and when a storm within, there is a calm without) let them bless God; but in the experience of Gods People, it is often found, that when their outward condition is troubled, their inward state and frame is full of perplexities and fears.

David found it so, *Psal. 116. 3. The sorrows of death compassed me, and (then also) the pains of hell got hold on me, I found trouble and sorrow,*

1 Sam. 23.

26.

Psal. 42. 7.

i. e. very much perplexity both inward and outward at once. So again, *Psal. 31. 22. In my haste* (i. e. when I was flying for my life before the face of *Saul*, and hard put to it) *then I said, I am cut off from before thine eyes.* Thus it was with *Jona*, chap. 2. 4. in the depth of his distress, saith he, *I am cast out of thy sight*; sad conclusions! touching not only Gods providential care over them, but his love towards them. Thus with *Paul*, 2 Cor. 7. 5. *without were fightings, within were fears, i. e.* Spiritual conflicts.

We find the whole Church in the *Lamentations* at the same pass, *Lam.*

3. 17, 18. *Thou hast removed my Soul far from Peace; I said, my strength and*

and my hope is perished from the Lord : alike sad is that Swoon of *Israel's* Faith, when they were in the Captivity, *Ezek. 37. 11.*

You'l ask what the reason and cause of this should be ?

1. It ariseth from their ignorance, especially in the fundamental Points of Religion, as touching our disease, and the remedy, and way of cure; the tenour of the Covenant of Grace, according to which God exactly proceeds in all his dealings with us; and we should ever carry it towards God. If a man be taken with a fit of sickness; knows not what he ails, nor what to take, nor how to apply that which is prescribed, nor how to order himself; is unsatisfied touching the way, skill and faithfulness of his Physitian, by his ignorance he is put to a sad plunge, and at his wits ends, ready to sink and welter; thus 'tis in our Spiritual condition : *David, Psal. 73. 12, 16.* is dangerously tossed in his Spirit upon waves of temptations, and much staggered about his condition, his feet were almost gone, he almost wrackt, and cast away. See the reason, *ver. 22. of Psal. 73. So foolish was I and ignorant :* ignorance is darkness, 'twill either find fears, or make them.

Reas. 1.

2. This ariseth from the ill and impudent carnal management of a more prosperous state; 'tis rare to receive much of this World, and not as the Prodigal to go a far off; 'tis hard to keep close to God in prosperity, when we have much of this World to live upon, and content our selves with: to live upon God, and make him our content and stay, as if we had no other life nor livelyhood but in him; we are very apt in such a case to contract a carnal frame, let go our hold of God, discustom our selves to the exercise of Faith, abate and estrange our affections from God. See how it was with *David, Psal. 30. 7. I said I should never be moved, thou hast made my mountain so strong.* I so-laced my self in these outward accommodations, as if I needed no other support, strength, or content, and there were no fear of a change; no care now to make God my constant joy and stay, and reckon upon God only for my portion, and that I must follow him with a Cross, and be conformed to my Saviour in being crucified to the World; what comes of this, *v. 7. Thou hidest thy face, and I was troubled, viz.* because he had too much indulged a life of sence. Children that are held up by their Nurser's hand, and mind not to feel their feet and ground; when the Nurser's let them go, they fall as if they had no feet or ground to stand upon. Or thus: we are like Children, which playing in the golden Sun-shine, and following their sport, stray so far from their Fathers house, that night coming upon them ere they are awake, they are as it were lost, and full of fears, not knowing how to recover home;

Reas. 2.

Luke 15.

12, 13.

the World steals away our hearts from God, gives so few opportunities for the exercise of the life of faith, and such advantages to a life of sense, wears off the sense of our dependance on God, and need thereof; so that when we are put to it by affliction, we are ready to miscarry, ere we can recover our weapon, or hold. Faith is our Cordial, *Psal. 27. 13*, now if it be not at hand (as in health when we have no need of it, it use to be) we may faint ere we recover the use of it.

3.

3. It ariseth from the shortness and dimness of our Spiritual Evidences. Our Evidences you know are great matters in point of estate, and livelyhood; and in affliction we are put to prove them; at which time if they be either not clear, or not at hand, we are at a great loss and plunge. A good man makes always conscience of *making his calling and election sure*, but he is especially put upon this work in affliction, then he considers, then searches more than in his ordinary course. Afflictions are as sharp, searching, winter-weather, will search whether your house be right or no; those garments, walls and windows that will serve in summer of prosperity, will be found defective in winter of adversity; then how stands the case between God and me, what ground of my confidence, what evidence that I am in Christ, &c. Though the least degree of Faith will save the house from falling, yet 'twill be a poor cold uncomfortable dwelling in winter, unless you mend the cracks, and flaws to defend you against driving piercing winds and storms.

4.

4. It ariseth, as it did here, from the remembrance of some sin unmortified, and therefore it may be, for ought we know, unpardoned. Affliction puts upon the remembrance of sin with more circumstances and aggravations, and to more purpose than ordinarily, even the best (which make most conscience hereof) attend to it in time of freedom; *Job 36. 8, 9, 10. If they be bound in fetters, and held in the cords of affliction, then he sheweth them their work and their transgressions wherein they have exceeded*; *1 King. 17. 18. Dost thou come to call my sin to remembrance in slaying* (afflicting me with the loss of) *my son?*

In stormy change of Weather, when Clouds gather black over us, and it begins to drop; then we feel it in our bones, what bruises or aches we have gotten. When a Man is arrested by one Creditor, all his Debts come in upon him. Even so when a Man is arrested with Sickness, or some other outward distress, then come in upon him the Debts, wherein he is bound over unto the Divine Law: when all is well with us, we can easily cast these Debts on the score of Christ, but now 'tis hot work. Affliction is the Glass of Sin, and the opening and awakening the Conscience to see it, and thence comes the Trouble upon

upon the Spirit; It is not all the stormy Winds upon the face of the Earth, but some generated in the bowels thereof which makes the earth shake.

5. It ariseth from Satan. When the eye of Conscience is most open, he is most busie to present, either that which may close it, or that which may trouble it; when the heart is most tender, he is most ready to bruise and wound it. In affliction he would make breaches between God and us, us and God, and us and our selves, (if we must needs be sensible of them) gulphs out of which there is no redemption; he tempts us unto sin in prosperity, and then for sin in adversity, as we find in *Jobs* Case; even in those which he knows are out of his reach, (where least strength and ground to do any thing there;) he is most malicious, as it appears in his bold attempts upon our Lord: If he cannot run thee upon a Rock, yet he will disquiet thee with a Tempest; if he cannot rob thee of thy Grace, yet he will of thy Peace and Comfort.

6. It ariseth from the weakness of Faith, and strength of Sense, apprehending God in affliction as our enemy, especially if there be some willing correspondence between us and any thing which God hates; God is a terror to us. Thus Sense wrought in *Job* 33: 10. *Behold, he findeth occasion against me, he counteth me for his enemy.* (Also chap. 16: 12, 14.) and in the Church, *Lam.* 2: 4, 5. *God hath bent his bow like an enemy, &c. and vers. 5. Oh! if thou comest to that of Jacob, Gen. 42: 36. Surely all these things are against me,* and in them God against me, it is sad with thee. This is the triumph of Faith, *If God be with us, who can be against us?* This the shriek of thy Fainting, *God is against me, and then who can be for me?*

7. It ariseth from Gods withdrawing. Thus with Christ; when God would make his condition sad, and his burden heavy indeed, the Father, and his own Divinity withdraw, and withhold their comfortable influential presence from the apprehension of the Humane Nature; and when was he thus spiritually afflicted? But when most outward trouble came upon him, when his Murderers and the Traytor were upon him, and his life drew near to the grave, as it was prefigured in *David*, when the *Psal.* 116: 3 sorrows or dangers of death compassed him about, then the terrors of Hell took hold upon him, (i.e.) terrors arising from this, the withdrawing of the Divine Love and Countenance. Now come his astonishing, dismaying fears and sorrows, pressing even to death, making him as it were to shrink from the great work of his own mercy. Now he cries out as his Type, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* The *Psal.* 22: perpetual shriek of them which are cast away. When we can with *Match.* 27.

David

1 Sam. 30. 6. David encourage ourselves in our relations to, and interest in God, then every, even the heaviest burden, even death it self, is light, and we can in Christs strength shake it off, or run away with it, as *Sampson* with the Gates of the City. But, as when the Sun is down or eclipsed, the flowers fold up and droop; or, when the Face before the Glass turns away, the Face in it vanisheth: Even so, when God hides his Face, and we doubt of our Title and Interest, we are troubled, and then we are as *Sampson* when his Covenant broken, and his locks, the sign thereof, cut; we are as other men, our strength is gone, any cord will bind us, any burden sink us, *Isa.* 64. 7.

Ref: 8.

8. I might add, it may arise from our disaffectedness with afflictions, as to our expectation and resolution. But for Use.

1. A word to them which are yet in their sins out of Christ; And it is, 1. Of Conviction. 2. Counsel.

1. Conviction, and terrour to them which are out of Christ. If Gods People be liable to inward and outward trouble at once, wherein yet there is not a drop of wrath; What shall the visitation of the rest be wherein there is not a drop of saving pity? If they may be so hardly put to it which yet are ever secretly and mightily supported, what shall they do that have no strength but their own to bear up under the mighty hand of God? Surely if they smart sevenfold, the wicked must be avenged seventy times sevenfold. If the cup of affliction, by reason of the bitter ingredient of inward perplexity, be so bitter to them; what becomes of them for whom the dregs of that Cup are reserved? The godly may stand condemned at their own Bar, but the wicked at Gods too, and nothing remains to them but a certain expectation of execution without a chance. Oh! if *Jacob* halt, sure *Esau*s back and bones must be broken; If the righteous be (by reason of sharp afflictions within and without) scarcely saved, (to whom yet all afflictions are through grace ever sufferable, short, and sanctified) where shall the sinner appear when his sins and sorrows shall meet together? There be three days wherein thou shalt never be able to hold up thy head, and yet thou must appear: First, A day of extream Calamity; Secondly, of Death; Thirdly, of Judgement. Oh! remember how sad it goes with the Godly in a day of outward Calamity; because of inward trouble joyning with it, through gradual want of Knowledge, Faith, and Evidence, the venom of sin unmortified, malice of Satan not yet quite troden under their feet, and the withdrawing of Gods Grace and Countenance in part. And consider how thou wilt speed, which hast no saving Knowledge, no Faith, no Interest, art under the reign of Sin and Satan, whom the holy and jealous

jealous God cannot endure to behold but with revenge and execration, *Psal. 27. 13.* David had fainted (in his affliction) had he not believed, &c. Surely then thou must utterly faint, because thou hast not obtained an heart to understand and believe to this day: The Children of God, notwithstanding all their inward and outward pressures, can say, as *Paul* sighs for them all, *2 Cor. 4. 8, 9.* *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, (so as there is no way to escape or bear up); We are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not quite destroyed.* But if thou lookest not to it betimes, such a day will come upon thee, wherein thou shalt be so ser with trouble, that thou wilt be absolutely concluded and shut out from all relief; so perplexed; that thou wilt despair; so pursued (by the avengers of blood) that thou wilt be quite forsaken of Heaven and Earth; so cast down, that thou wilt be utterly destroyed and dash'd in pieces. Oh! if trouble, such trouble, may seize on God's dear ones, what reprobate fear and astonishment shall take hold on thee that art a stranger, a slave, an enemy, and yet secure and presumptuous in that condition!

2. It is a word of Counsel to thee, as to be an alarm to thy security, so an Antidote to thy presumption and censoriousness in reference to the godly. The men of the world can easily pass over the beams of raging wickedness in themselves and their own, but they maliciously and proudly aggravate the mores of infirmity in the godly. If they carry themselves unbecomingly by any impatience under the hand of God; now they are Hypocrites presently, now they sink, notwithstanding they would seem to have special interest in, and acquaintance with God to bear them up. Thus was *Job* censured, even by his friends, for which God censures them, and that with wrath, *Job 42. 7.* Thus Gods People serve themselves, but especially they have this measure from the men of the World: They see them drop and walk heavily under some outward burden, which they think is but ordinary; they see them faint, having drunk of the cup of affliction which is common, but alas they consider not what may be (the weight of their burden) within, what bitter ingredients may be in their Cup, as to their inward man. Now the Spirit is the man, the mind is the strength, and they are not aware how tender the love of God hath made that, and how grieved and broken that may be upon some spiritual account between God and them, *Jacob* reproves *David* for mourning so excessively for *Abraham*, (and at first sight we may think it strange that so eminent a Saint as *David* should so take on for an outward loss, more, as it seems, than for the loss of Gods Favor and Grace) but *Jacob* did not know and consider what visitation there

there might be within *David*, while God stood over him with that outward rod; how God might set on that outward blow with some inward smart, and rebuke upon his Spirit in such an intimation as this, *Oh! David*, thou that wert so obliged to me more than thousands, I'll make thee know 'tis an evil and bitter thing to provoke me, and dishonour my Name as thou hast done, thy Child is dead, *Absalom* is gone with a Curse, and *Adonijah* shall follow, and now what hast thou gotten by hearkening to temptations, and pleasing thy self in the enticements of thy naughty heart? No question but there were some such workings of Gods displeasure within him, and therefore no wonder he took on so heavily, as *Psal. 39. 11.* therefore do not pass sentence upon the Godly in their extremities till thou canst hear, and see all the bitterness of their Condition.

Use, 2.

2. The second word is to the Godly. 1. They which are not, but may be beset with this double perplexity. 2. They which are.

1. *Art thou in a state of freedom and exemption? bless God; thy lot is very comfortable, but be not secure, indulge not thyself with a persuasion that it will always last.* For

1. Thou hast married Christ with his Cross; or not at all; thou art delivered from the Curse indeed, but thou art appointed to the Cross, and canst not with integrity except any part thereof; that without or that within.

2. Outward afflictions and troubles may be many, and heavy, one upon the neck of another, and by reason of them though they come single, thou mayest endure an hard brunt, and have enough to exercise thy whole strength of Faith, and Patience.

3. Inward Affliction may come, and that's far more heavy and grievous, the Soul is infinitely more tender than the Body, and yet scalding water upon the eye, can very hardly be endured. *Q then! a wounded spirit, who can bear that?*

4. 'Tis not improbable, nor unusual, that both these Rods may come upon thee, at once, and then thy affliction is a load upon a broken back; now thou wilt have thy hands full indeed, and very hardly be saved; now thou wilt need not onely all the strength which thou hast, but all which thou mightst have had.

2. You'll say, *Sirs, what shall we do?* I answer, (as in natural distempers) 1. You must take some Preparatives and Prophylacticks, to prevent the Disease if it may be, or at least to break the strength of it, if it doth come, that we may not sink under it.

2. Some

2. Some Cordials, Restoratives, and Therapeuticks for the Cure of the malady when it is come; I shall endeavour by the Grace of God to help you in these two cases and conclude.

1. Then for Direction by way of Preparation.

Direct. 1.

1. Labour to be well seen in points of saving knowledge, especially Fundamentals. Ignorance I told you was the cause of soul-distress, and it is so: the impregnable impediment of comfort most-what in the Godly; they are not thoroughly informed, they do not understand themselves well in the matter of the Covenant of Grace, the Doctrine, Way, Benefit, Terms of it, and the mistakes about it; if they were clear in these things, they would have a fairer way to comfort, and more easily go to the wells of Salvation to draw water of life at any, even the darkest time; our Saviour prescribes this receipt in *John 16. 33. These things have I told you, &c.* (viz. the great things of the Gospel, such as those, *vers. 28. That I came from the Father, i. e. to purchase all, and I go to the Father, i. e. to procure and apply all*) these things say the Disciples thou hast spoken plainly, thou hast given us clear evidence and full information of these, &c. points of knowledge; And what advantage did Christs teaching and their learning and understanding of these great matters tend to? *That in me ye might have Peace,* (when) *in the World ye shall have Tribulation.* Christ had promised he would not leave them comfortless, *John 14. 18.* and this is the course he takes, and the way he puts the Disciples into, to prevent or prepare for Tribulation, that it might not spoil them of their inward Peace, viz. Instruction and Knowledge. O! the Lord give you with utmost diligence to follow on to know, and to work in what you know into your hearts; So shall you have that within you, which (in dependence on Christ in the many points well understood) will be of singular use and advantage, to quiet and compose your Spirits in all your Troubles and Languishments; grounds of knowledge are grounds of support and comfort.

2. In order to the forenamed second cause of this distemper, be sure you be close with, and often taking hold on God by renewed acts of Faith. My Brethren, Faith is not to be acted only at first, for our entrance into the State of Grace, but 'tis our duty and wisdom, to carry on the exercise of Faith for our continuance, and progress in that state and passage through all those Temptations, Difficulties, Oppositions, Discouragements we are to meet withal therein: Faith and Prayer must be as the breathing of our Souls in and out, to keep the heart in life: *the Just shall live* (i. e. every part, degree, and act of life) *by his*

Direct. 2.

A a a

Faith;

- Faith*; this again is the order the great Physician of our Souls prescribes, *John 14. 1. Let not your hearts be troubled*; why how shall they prevent or help it? *believe!* they were Believers already. Oh! but they must still in reference to every change and condition, or occasion of life, especially in order to this, that they may not be troubled in trouble, that the storm get not into their hearts, to shake and shatter them with; in, they must believe, *i. e.* they must be much in the acting and exercising of Faith, upon the grounds thereof; 'tis sad that I shall now say: We come to some Christians in their dumps and despondencies, shew them the Promise, Christ in it, the way to it: they are so to seek, that they scarce know what we mean; we are as *Barbarians* to them, they are ready to faint under our hand, before we can (as it were) stanch their bleeding, or apply any Plaister, or Cordial, or make them understand their way and ground of support and comfort, and all this for want of use and exercise of Faith; the acting of any faculty (where life is not come to the declining state, as it never fares with the life of Grace) strengthens that faculty; and that person can readily, even in the dark, go to his Rest or Cordial, where he uses himself to be; therefore, take a Christian, which makes conscience to bear his weight on the ground and object of Faith (Christ in the promise of Free-grace) to a sensible lost undone sinner, let World and Devil conspire to trouble him, and God try him; saith he, I know not what to do, but I'll try my old way, 'tis good for me to draw near still, I'll do so still as I use to do, I'll cast my self down upon the Free-Grace of Christ in the Promise; I'll lay the weight of my sinking spirit there, I'll renew my hold, life, expectation there; this is my old path, I'll never be turned, or beaten out here. This Christian in his strength may challenge all the gates of Hell.
- Isa. 26. 3.* This was *David's* course, *Psal. 71. 5. Thou art my trust from my youth, &c.* thence was it, that he could say in *Psal. 56. 3. At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee*; his shield and sword was always in his hand, therefore he could make use of it when fear and inward trouble offered themselves. Afraid! alas who is not; but, what course will you take then? even what course you use to take, *i. e.* Believe, use Faith always, and have it now.
- Direct. 3.* 3. In reference to the third and seventh cause of trouble of mind (coming in conjunction with trouble in outward things) *viz.* short and dim Evidence; Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if you do so, you shall never fall, *i. e.* under the power of sin and
- 2 Pet. 1. 10.* wrath, which make up the spiritual burden; but so an abundant entrance shall be administered to you into the Kingdom; &c. *i. e.* you shall have a safe

a safe and secure, peaceable, quiet, comfortable, well-assured passage through all the straights and storms we can meet withal on this side the Kingdom, even death it self; rest upon Christ always by Faith of adherence on Gospel terms, and you are safe: but rest not, sit not down with this Faith, for 'tis not enough to comfort you in an evil day, though to support it is.

Obj. *Oh! but I have laboured and waited, and yet cannot obtain.*

Ans. But go on and thou canst not miss it (for 'tis promised, *Esay* 32. 17. & 57. 19. *Rom.* 8. 16. &c.) and thou shalt have assurance in thy greatest need; better affliction find thee in this work and pursuit, then put thee upon it (as for certain it will to thy cost) when affliction comes, then first for a man to begin to put the question, Am I in Christ? am I in the state of Grace? favour of God, &c? Oh! thou wilt find it hard to get above thy fears; but *Psal* 46. 1. *God is a very present help in time of trouble, i.e.* for assurance in a darksome state when thou canst make no shift without it; do thou very much seek God for it in thy freedom, and thou shalt be sure of it in thy need, he will be *very much found* (Hebr.) as before, give all diligence to make, and thou art sure.

4. Add hereunto in order to the promoting of a well-grounded evidence and assurance, a prudent observation of, and careful attendance to the doubts, which arise upon occasion, about your condition; there is no Christian attains to that degree of assurance, but is sometimes troubled with doubts, *viz.* such as these:

Direct. 4.

1. I was never humbled enough; my sore was never searched to the bottom; can my cure be done with so little pain?

2. I never knew the beginning, or manner of my conversion; can Grace like dew come without noise, in insensible degrees? Surely I am at best, but a refined moralist.

3. I can be heartily and excessively afflicted for outward losses, &c. but sin, as sin, is not such a burden to me; and the loss of Gods favour goes not so near me.

4. I can pour out my heart in vain delights, but have little liveliness of affection for Spiritual things.

5. I grow heavier, and heavier in duties, and I think were it not for shame, I should be ready to lay them aside, and tread them under foot, so little joy do I take in them, so little good do I get by them, and the like.

Now what dost thou? shift off and let pass these and other like doubts, without endeavouring by what means thou canst, to solve, and

assoil them with some resolution and satisfaction; this will be of ill consequence, I'll tell thee what will come of it, they will return upon thee and be as moles in thy eyes, gravel and thorns in thy feet, when the hand of God is upon thee; whereas if they were well weighed, there would scarce a scruple be found in them.

Direct. 5.

5. To meet with the fourth cause of the Disease, which is some sin returning, &c. cast up thy Spiritual Accounts, and set them even every day; observe thy particular sins, offences, breaches, which we are ever making between God and us; humble thy self, in a Heart-breaking; Soul-grieving particular acknowledgement of them, and strengthen thy self, and set thy self aright, by a particular application of Christ in the Grace of the Promise, in reference to these particular offences, so acknowledged; Sins that through negligence escape thy observation, will return to make cracks and flaws in thy Evidence which Affliction will find out to thy terrour and disquietment, but if thou takest this course, the Word is for thee, *i. e. John 1. 9. If we confess; and Lev. 26. 40:* and now if this or that sin return, what mayst thou say; Truth Lord, I am guilty, and my guilt thou dost justly suffer to be awakened in this evil day, and hour of temptation, but Lord thou knowest this, and this sin in particular hath been my burden, under which I have poured out my heart in groans and complaints, imploring and applying Christ in the promised Grace of Pardon, and Power in reference to it, and thou hast heard it and known it; in this case though Afflictions seem to search out iniquity, yet it shall not be found; but when Affliction starts some sin, which thou didst wink at or slightly pass over, then thou wilt find trouble and sorrow indeed.

Psal. 32. 5.

Direct. 6.

6. Because there is much malignity in this distemper, let me here also add in reference to the same cause, and the sixth, this Preventive. Follow on the Work of Mortification close; there is, a combat between Flesh and Spirit; be sure you take the right side, if sin be it which embitters thy life, and gives a sting to every Affliction, disarm Affliction, and kill that which will kill thee; the design of the Lord in Affliction is Mortification, now if thou joynest thy hand in the same work, God is ever with thee in the same way, and not against thee; but in case thou connivest at, hidest, shelterest some known corruption, then thou canst hardly apprehend God, but as thine Enemy coming against thee.

Isa. 27. 9.

As it was with the City of *Abel*, *2 Sam. 20.* they were terrified at the approach of *Joab* and *David's* Army, Oh! saith the woman upon the Wall, *art thou come to destroy the Inheritance of the Lord?* no saith *Joab*,

Joab, but there's a Traitor *Sheba* harboured here, &c. 'Tis he that put the City into fear and danger, and made *Joab* seem their Enemy, when his head was delivered all was quiet; now when thou insitest on the business of Mortification, thou wilt joy when thou fallest into Tribulation, as it was with *Jael*, *Judg. 4.* having done execution upon *Sisera*, Come saith she to *Barak*, &c. *Welcome my Lords*, I know whom you pursue, here he is dead at your feet, *Behold the Nail in his temples*: O! saith one, visited with the stroke of Death, I have been long getting down this body of death, and now God will do all my work at once; be not slack in this work, and Afflictions will be more joyous than grievous;

71. Yet again, to come to the root of this malignity, and in order to the advancing of the work of Mortification: endeavour after mortified affections to the World, these are the suckets that draw away thy strength from God, and the fuel and foment and strength of all that corruption that must be mortified. Aversion from God, with an immoderate clinging and cleaving to the creature, is the whole corruption of Nature. Affliction is the reducing thee to God, and the ungluing, disengaging, and divorcing thee from a carnal worldly interest: therefore *minus gaudebis, minus dolebis*, the less thou joyest, the less thou ruest; the less thou layest a World-interest near thy heart, the less that Affliction which is the parting work, will go to thy heart; therefore let all creature-comforts and advantages be loose about thee as thy cloathes, which thou mayest easily lay aside, and not as thy skin, which cannot be pulled off without great torture; Affliction endangers nothing but that which is outward, therefore let not thy excessive respect to that which is without thee, make thy Affliction an inward terror. If thou countest the World of no value, thou wilt be able without inward perplexity and fear to pass through all places of danger and plunder; as the Travellour, when he carries but a small matter, which he knows if he loses, it will not at all undo him. Besides, *If thou lovest the World, the love of the Father is not in thee*, and this will be a desperate venomous sting to thy Soul in thy Affliction; if thou wouldst not have the World thy plague and thy poyson in the enjoying, thy wrack and thy terror in the losing, comply with the Word and Spirit of Grace in the application of a Christ crucified for the crucifying and mortifying of thy affections unto every earthly interest.

Direct. 7.

8. In reference to the eighth cause (unacquaintedness with Affliction) live in the meditation and expectation of the Cross, be much

Direct. 8.

in

in the knowledge of the necessity, nature, and design of afflictions.

1. Necessity. *1 Pet. 1. 6. If need be you must be in heaviness for a time.* In respect of the terms of the Covenant which lie in this, Deny your self, and take up your Cross, &c. And in respect of your disposition, we cannot be without them to wear us from the World, to imbitter the creature to us, to conform us to a crucified Saviour, and make us partakers of his holiness.

2. The nature and design of Afflictions; They are fire not to consume our Gold, but to purge away our Dross; they are not revenging Judgements, but fatherly medicinal Corrections; not judicial Poyson, but remedial Physick, &c. Therefore *1 Pet. 4. 12. Think not strange, be not strangers* (as the word imports) to the fiery and greatest trial, and thou wilt not be dismayed when it comes. Even Poyson may be habituated and made innocent. If a stranger come in unexpected into our house, grim and armed with instruments of mischief, we know not whence he is, nor what he comes for, it will startle and appale us: But if we be acquainted with him and his design, and expect him, we are quier, and composed to entertain him. So when Affliction comes, we can say, This is the Cup my Father gives me, who I am sure means me no hurt, this is but what I looked for every day, &c. Inure we therefore our selves to the Cross, and make it familiar, conversing with it in our meditation and expectation. Seest thou one afflicted with the loss of a Wife, another of a Husband, another of a Child, another of Estate, another begging bread in Prison or distress, &c. bear part of his burden in sympathy and pity, and readiness to succour him, and put thy self in his or her case, supposing thou wert so and so (it will do thee no hurt), what shouldst thou do? And so God will make thy burden light, *Psal. 41. 1.* So thou wilt be prepared to entertain and meet the burden, and it shall not fall upon thee, and upon thy spirit to crush and sink thee, &c. Think often; and think not amils (have no hard conceits) of Affliction, and it shall not be hard upon thee. Take this Course, and then as for the malice of Satan, in accusing and tormenting, and the seeming severity of the Lord, in withholding and withdrawing, thou shalt not need to trouble thy self, for Satan is a restrained and conquered enemy, and cannot hurt thee; and God is reconciled, and will not hurt thee: He may try thee, by intercepting the sweetness of fruition; He will never curse thee, by intermitting or breaking the firmness of the Union; and if he hide his face for a moment, lament after him, and he will visit thee with the everlasting kindness of his compassion, which changes not, though there may be a change as to what thou feelest.

Thus

Thus much for the Preventives, to prepare for double Afflictions upon the inward and outward man before they come. Now secondly what shall they do that are already under them?

Negative. Do not go about to settle thy mind by diversion, or turning thy thoughts another way; nor think that time will wear off this trouble; for this will but encrease thy disquiet in it self, or in the causes of it, and wear off the sense of thy condition, which is occasional and preparative to thy well-grounded peace and settlement.

2. Design not a little ease; the sore that is but skin'd over will break out again and be more dangerous, put in therefore for a cure, and that not partial, but through.

Positively take this course upon the sense of thy condition, and the actual knowledge of the fundamental matters of the Covenant of Grace. First, and immediately come, (at least) look unto Christ for Faith, and then by Faith, looking to him as the Author of Faith, believe, consent with all thy heart to receive him, and rest on him on the terms of the Gospel, to be saved by him only in his own way, at his own rate: this is the course David, *Jonah*, the Church, in the places aforenamed, took; this is the course the Lord prescribes, *Isa. 50. 10. Who, &c. Let this Child of Light*, (and such thou art if thou takest this course, fearst to sin against God, and hearkenest to this word I now speak) *living in darkness and seeing no light* (there is the depth of trouble of mind) *trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God*. His Name is the Lord God gracious, &c. *Emmanuel*, a Saviour, Ypreaching his truths all the day long (any time before the night of death close thy eyes and Christs bowels) even to the disobedient, and will in no wise cast out or lose any that come to him upon all his own terms. Thou dear troubled heart, how wilt thou heal and settle thy self, what wilt thou do? Wilt thou first make satisfaction by thy mourning, humiliation, reformation, purpose of amendment, and so commend and ingratiate thy self to Christ? Thou nestlest upon a false bottom, and thy heart deceives thee; sound rest and peace is not to be had this way, if it be thy first, principal, or only way.

On the other hand; Are you willing to let Christ to let you into Heaven, and not lead you his own way? Are you under his Government in all things? then you run away from Christ, and cannot be saved by him as such: But dost thou freely and willingly consent upon the sense of thy lost condition, to take Christ for all purposes, for Grace and Glory? Thou art welcome to him, and let this be thy rest, in coming to him burdened and weary, willing to take his yoke upon thee; *Mat. 11. 28. He saves thee*

Direct. 1.

Bijdo

Jo2

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Direct. 2.

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Bijdo

Exod. 33. 19

Jo2

Bijdo

Jo2

thee to the utmost, only upon coming. Let this be satisfaction and settlement in thy trouble, from whatever cause it comes. Oh! how clear is this way according to the contents of the Covenant of Grace which is thus: Christ stands always ready to receive any that is willing to come to him upon his terms, and will never cast them off.

Object. Oh, but if he were my God, and my Christ, I would come to him and believe in him.

Sol. Your coming thus to him upon his own terms makes him yours; gives the interest, and shall give the true rest.

Object. Oh! but I have long stood out against his invitations, and rejected his importunities; Christ hath called graciously, and I have heard. His Spirit hath knocked, and my Conscience hath pressed me to believe and come, and yet I have stood out, and now I may expect he will throw me away with indignation; I have denied Mercy so many times, and Mercy will surely now deny me; and here comes in thy trouble.

Sol. No, he will not in any wise cast thee out if thou art willing to come. He knew that all that belong to his Grace, till they are effectually called and quickened, and drawn to close with mercy in the offer, will serve him thus, and therefore he waits still, and still, till they can be gotten to be willing to accept and close with him, and then for certain he closeth with them.

Object. Oh! but I have made my address, and seemed to come to him, and have made profession, and been taken for a Believer many years, but I have falsified with him. I am a studied Hypocrite, and have compassed God with Lies: Surely then there is no Mercy for me.

Sol. All this ariseth from thy ignorance of the Tenour of the Covenant of Grace, which calls thee to believe upon the sense of this also. Suppose all this, (though these sad workings of thy doubts and troubles are no bad signs, being but part of thy Combat,) yield all against thy self if there be no other way, (and it may be there is no better way in this juncture) yet now be willing on Gospel terms, and it is done, and thou mayst be at rest as if all thy former work had been true; and it may be it was true, but however one or the other, thy way is immediately to come, and that shall be cleared up afterward; and if thou hast doubled with God, thou wilt be rather be afraid to do so still.

Object. Oh! but now come? This would be only self and slavish fear; my necessity compels me now; I can make no other shift: There is no ingenuity in such a faith as I am like to put forth in this my extremity.

Sol. Thou must yet be willing, &c. and all is well. The occasion of believing is always extremity and necessity, for none ever came to Christ as long as they

they could make any shift without him, but the cause if thou comest is the mighty power of God to make thee unsaindly willing upon all the terms; and thou art no less acceptable to God, because thou art constrained by Grace upon the pinch of thy necessity to come, *Rom. 11. 32. Hos. 5. ult.* God puts thee to this pinch that he might hear of thee; in that latter place, it is as if God had said, Well, I have called again and again, and used variety of means with this People, but all in vain; I will take another course, I will leave them, go to my place, hide my self, that trouble, and horror, and anguish shall take hold on them; and what then? Shall it be unseasonable and too late to come? No, then they will and shall seek me early; see how well-come a sinner is in this case to Christ. The Prodigal, he runs his course, spends all in Riot and Luxury, and was reduced to utter extremity, and then he be-thinks himself of coming home; *I will go, there be many Mansions in Luke 15. my Fathers House, and I perish for want of Bread.* Being upon this knowledge of his Fathers fulneis drawn, and upon sense of his own lostness driven, he comes; And what Salutation do you think his Father might give him? What are you come indeed? In good time? You, that have all this while taken your swinge in all Wickedness, as long as you could live, my House was not good enough for you; and now, that you have laid me under the reproach of your leudness, and fulfilling your lusts, as long as you had a penny in your Purse, or a rag to your back: Do you now come to me? There is no duty or affection to me that swayes you hither, but you are compelled by the extremity you have brought your self to: Get you gone with a sorrow, and never look me in the face more. Thus we would have thought, but it is quite otherwise, his Father, when he did but say he would come, meets him afar off, falls on his neck, kisses him, brings him home, provides the best Room, the best Robe, the best Kid, all the best, and there is great joy; His Father doth not question what draws, or what drives; whether he comes out of compelling necessity, or out of ingenuity and dutiful affection; But he is come, that is enough. *This my Son was dead, and is alive; was lost, and is found;* and there's all done that possibly may make him well-come. Apply it for your encouragement to believe, and settlement in your undoubted interest by Faith, Though you seem to come late, and out of necessity, yet Gods thoughts are not your thoughts, yours may be thoughts of wrath, &c. but Gods are of pity, love, acceptation upon your coming. Thus you see your way is immediately to come and cast your selves upon Christ, on the terms of the Gospel, and your great trouble shall be removed.

Make not a judgment of your condition from what you feel, but from what you hear, from the Word of Grace which now gives sentence on your side.

Direct. 3.

Then having this for your support, search, look back to experiences; look into your selves what marks you can find of the truth of your Faith: and in this, be sure you take hold on the Promise that lies nearest to you, *i. e.* is most suitable to your present condition, as in point of fear to *sin, Isa. 50. 10.* Lustness, *Mat. 18. 11.* Poverty of spirit, Longing and thirsting after Righteousness, &c. *Mat. 5. 3, 4, 6.* and so one Grace and Promise will draw in all.

Direct. 4.

In dependence on Christ in the Promise, wait till he speaks peace and assurance, ever fearing to offend God, especially by casting off duty, distrusting of him, charging him with folly, limiting him to time or means, knowing, and assuring your selves, That you cannot so please God in any thing, as in resolved Faith to cleave to him, and to follow him fully in the patient expectation of the promise of Grace and Glory.

Thus accepting Christ in the Covenant, in the strength of the Grace thereof, Give up thy whole self to Christ in a Covenant of willing universal unreserved obedience, and say with *David*, *Psal. 85. 8.* *I will hearken what the Lord will say, for he speaketh peace to his people, that (by the power thereof) they turn not again to folly.*

In

In what Things must we use Moderation, and in what not?

Phil. 4. 5.

Let your Moderation be known unto all Men, the Lord is at hand.



That St. *Austin* said in his dayes of another Scripture, That it stood more in need of good practising, than any learned Interpretation: That may I say in these dayes wherein I live, concerning the words that I have read to you at this time. I shall not therefore detain you, with shewing their coherence, (especially considering their intireness) or with any glossing upon them,

but haste to open the Nature of this Duty, and prels the practice thereof upon you all. In the Verse you have two general parts.

1. An Exhortation to the shewing Moderation, which being in *materia necessaria*, is a Command.

2. The Argument enforcing it, *The Lord is at hand.* The former will bound my present Discourse, which I need not alter, but according to the Grammatical order the words stand in, might consider the *persona, res, & actiones* exprest therein, all which make up the whole of the Duty enjoyned: yet if you please to have the Proposition formed, take it thus,

It is God's Command, and our Duty, to let our Moderation be known unto all men. Which I shall prosecute, according to the order of Nature, in this method. 1. In opening the Nature of Moderation. 2. In shewing its Exercise. 3. By whom, and to whom. 4. Why. And lastly, Make Application.

Bbb 2

1. Con-

Doctr.

Moderation
opened.

1. Concerning the nature of *Moderation*, or what it is; wherein the signification of the Word, description of the Thing; its Subject, Kinds, Rule, and Extrems. And here I confess I enter upon an unbeaten path; the word *μετριοτης*, and *μετριος*, which descends from it, (and for which, by a Græcisme, it is used in the Text) being of such multifarious signification, and no where in Scripture rendred in that extent as here, nor any where else (that I can find) by *Moderation*, which also occurs in no other place of all the Bible. It signifies properly that which is *fit, decent, due, meet, convenient*.

Καὶ ὁμοίως,
μετρίως, με-
τρίως, ἡμεῖς.
Hesych.
ἐν μέτρῳ τὸ
μετρίως.
Etymol.
Modestia dicta
est à modo, ubi
autem modus
nec plus est
quicquam nec
minus Cicer.
Est autem mo-
destia in ani-
mo continens
moderationem
cupiditatum.
Idem. 3. Rhet.

And is accordingly rendred by former Interpreters, *Modestia*; not as opposed to pride or haughtiness, in its strict Philosophick acceptation, (which some not attending to, have therefore quarrelled with) but that which doth moderate our actions, in which sense the Masters of that Language frequently use it; and by later, for avoiding that ambiguity, *Moderatio*, from whence is formed our English word *Moderation*. Which (in its latitude) is not any particular Grace or Vertue, but that fit & proper temper we ought to observe in the governing of our hearts and lives: that equal Judgment which should command our wills and affections, and all our humane actions, which are capable of excess or defect, by proportioning them according to the quality of the Object, and the end for which, and whom they are employed, for the preserving of peace within our selves, and with others; that there may be no contumacy or rebellion in our affections to disquiet our selves, or in our actions to disquiet others. So that Moderation, according to its Subject, is either that of the mind, which is as the cause, or of the will and affections in their actings, which is as the effect, from all which the whole man is denominatd *Moderate*. The former, or that of the mind, is that part of Christian prudence, which proportions our actions to the Object which the will chooseth, and its end, according to the variety of circumstances the agent is in, by applying the general rules of Scripture for our walking, to our particular actions, and is accordingly well rendred here, by one of the Antients, *rationalis conversatio*, your reasonable or equitable Conversation. The latter, of the will, pertains to the several and particular vertues therein, especially those that serve for the restraining our most strong and impetuous passions, which offer the greatest violence to the equality of our minds. And therefore, although it most properly be of the judgment, yet being most conspicuous and discernable in the exercise of such Vertues, it doth, according to the quality of the Object about which they are conversant, assume their several notions and names. The most violent

Ambros in loc

lent passions in reference to our selves, being the lusting power after the good things of this life, and consequently the grief which arises from the want or loss of them; it is therefore in reference to the former, *Temperance* (in its large acceptation); and the latter, *Patience*; and in relation to others, the raging power of anger and revenge, with what flows from them, in which regard it is in the Magistrate, *Clemency*, and *humanity*, *mercies*, *gentleness*, *lenity*, in all. In this variety is the word used by Authors, Sacred and Profane, which I will not clog you with. And for this cause, it consists in that mediocrity which approaches nearer to the extrem of defect, and consequently is opposed to *violence*, *impetuosity*, or *inordinancy of affection*, (not as placed upon undue objects, for that's materially evil, and to be wholly declined, nor moderated, but upon lawful moderation) and in general, to all *excess* in humane actions. Hence it is, (by the way) as I conceive, that it's commanded so frequently in Scripture by negative Precepts, as, *Love not the World, nor the things of the World*, John 2. 15. *Take no thought for your life, for the morrow*, Matth. 6. 24, 31, 34, *verses*. *Fear not them which kill the body*, Mat. 10. 12, 31. Luke 12. 4, 7. *Let not your hearts be troubled*, John 14. 1. and many the like, which I cannot stand to mention; and sometimes by the action contrary to its opposite vice, as *Matth. 5. 39, 40, 41*. *Turn the other cheek; let him have thy Cloak also; go with him twain*, i. e. rather than violently resist, and revenge thy self. Moderation then being no particular Grace or Virtue, (as you have heard) cannot have any peculiar object, but only in common with the Principles, and actions wherein it is imployed; whereby it becomes incapable of any future accurate division into several kinds. For although it be of a general consideration, yet not as a Principle which acts upon its Object, but that which peculiarly respects the actions themselves, when the Object is pitched upon, it being Moderations Office to regulate and govern Principles in their actions upon their due Objects chosen, that they exceed not therein. So that all those Graces and Virtues, which respect the *manner of Actions*, as Zeal, Sincerity, &c. that respect the moral quality, as this doth the moral quantity, degree, or measure of them, are of so many several kinds, as the actions are wherein they are conversant; so also is Moderation. And in regard our particular actions are so very many, so diverse, and clothed with such infinite variety of circumstances; it is impossible to lay down any certain *Rule*, that may determine wherein Moderation in them all should consist: The *τά δίκαια*, or the things that are just, necessary, and convenient, and no other, being always in particular actions very difficult

ἐπιεικὲς τῷ
βίῳ ὁρροπία
Hermog.
μεδία ὁρρο-
βουλίας,
ἀλλὰ ἐπιείκεια,
ἐπιεικὲς, &c.
Hoc.

difficult to define, as the Philosopher acknowledgeth, who saith, *There is nothing more full of difficulty, than in every thing to find the Mean*: The Rule he lays down to walk by, is Reason, and a prudent mans determination; the best Nature affords, and are especially good for the Duties of the second Table, which he only (though not to all) speaks of; yet we (through the goodness of God) have a more sure and certain one to guide us, to which we shall do well to take heed, even the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise to Salvation. It will be worth our while, to speak briefly, what we can, touching the *Rule*, which in general must guide and determine our Moderation. For which end we must know, that all our humane actions, which are capable of moral good or evil, are of two sorts, especially according to their Objects, *Religious or Civil*. The former requires a Spiritual Principle, End, and Rule, by which we must perform them for their manner and measure, which Scripture doth abundantly for the internal by its particular, and sufficiently for the external, by its general Precepts, declare. For the latter or Civil Actions, as a natural principle and end referrible to God's Glory; so also for their manner and measure, the general rules of Scripture to allow, and prescribe them, is all we can reasonably expect, and is sufficient for the same. In the Application whereof, Reason and prudent determination are three ways subservient.

1. In judging the Nature or Quality of the Objects, in general, which we are particularly imployed about, (as the good things, or evils of this life, in the particulars wherein we are conversant) according to what Scripture declares them to be, when it speaks of them, especially not comparatively, but absolutely what they are in themselves.

2. Of the end God hath ordained such things for, about which he hath commanded us to be imployed, and accordingly to proportion our actions. It being a known Rule in the Schools, *Omnium appetibilium finis est mensura*; or, that the end is that which must prescribe the measure of our actions, according to its double respect, *rei, & personae*, for what, and for whom the action is.

Lastly, In due consideration of the circumstances of the Agent, wherein is such great variety, not only in regard of the person, which involves the end for whom the action is, but all the adjacent circumstances, that herein occurs by far the greatest difficulty. For example, In Meats and Drinks. Consider diligently their nature in those set before thee; then their end, for refreshing us, not feeding our lusts; and of thy self, what is sufficient and convenient for thee in the circumstances thou art then in, and accordingly use them, or put a knife to thy throat

thrust and refrain, as the Wise man speaks, *Prov. 13. 2.* for that which may but be sufficient for one, may serve for another to make his Belly his God: yea, that which may be only convenient to the same person at one time, may be gluttony and excess at another. And as about things, so in our dealing with others much more variety, both in respect of our selves, and those we have to do withal. As we must remit that to one, we need not, nay, sometimes ought not to another, according to our own and their capacity; as they are poorer or richer than our selves, as they are weak, or wilful and malicious opposers of Truth or Equity; and a thousand such like considerations, which occur in our actions; which though alwayes sufficient in themselves to determine us, yet because of our shortness of sight, are often but as the uncertain twinkling star-light to us, whereby to steer our course.

All that's said of Moderation, will more clearly appear, if we consider its *Extremes*, from the nature of God's Commands, which are of two sorts. 1. Some are Affirmative, and those either general what we must do, &c. and imply the end for which, and all the circumstances that necessarily attend our doing it: Or particular, and express the circumstances External, as time and place, and Internal (usually called the manner) which comprehends the quality, and the moral quantity or proportion, we are speaking of) which implies the *intensity*, *frequency*, and *duration* of our actions. These continually oblige us, though not to continual practice, but only when God requires; the former by way of more absoluteness, the latter more conditionally, as depending *thereupon*. 2. The other sort of precepts are Negative, somewhat we must not do, and so consequently at once forbid all the concomitants of such actions as are prohibited; others not forbidding us the Object, but rectifying us about it, in the end we must do it, for manner how, &c. both which obliges to continual observance; and in morals, to the *contrary duties*. By which it appears, in our not right proportioning our actions, we sin in omission, by not doing so fully as he commands; in commission, when we do those things that are our duty, but exceed therein, and go beyond the bounds God hath set us: and this is formally immoderateness, which is rectified by Moderation. As for actions materially evil, as *Jonah's* being angry with God, hating virtue, and loving vice, &c. which are absolutely forbidden, no proportion is to have place, but it, and all other circumstances, together with the action, wholly avoided or suppressed, because towards undue objects forbidden us, there can be no defect, in regard there should be no action, and therefore no Moderation or Government thereof.

For

For instance, in those two great Commands, on which hang all the Law and the Prophets, as our blessed Saviour tells us, *Matth. 22. 46. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy Neighbour as thy self,* Luke 10. 27. Here's the Grace of Love required to act towards God; the manner exprest, in *heart, soul, strength, mind*; the measure, in the *four all's*, (the New Testament adding one to the three of the Old Testament, so far is the Gospel from detracting from duty): here can be no excess, in regard we can never love him as he deserves; not only in regard of what he hath done for us, but is to us, being our end and happiness; and towards our Neighbour, the manner exprest, *as thy self*, i. e. truly and sincerely, but not *with all thy heart*, &c. that's only God's due, who is absolutely to be loved for himself, others for him. Herein, alas, Grace is defective, but never exceeds, so that Moderation hath here no place; for if we love any person or thing more than God, Christ, and our selves, it is not the action of Grace, but sinful affection, which is to be moderated. For he that with his natural affection loves Father or Mother, Wife or Child, (which yet they ought greatly to love) more than God or Christ, is not worthy of them.

I am not ignorant all this while, that this word *moderatus*, is most frequently used in a *forensic or Law sense*, more strictly: The *Moralists, Schoolmen, and Civilians*, borrowing it from *Aristotle*, and restraining it to that *particular moderation of mitigating stricks justice in the execution of humane Laws*, and so is rendred, *Equitas Equitie*. Which is either that of the Magistrate in his publick capacity, & is so *Clemencia clementie*, and is opposed to *Cruelty*: The Magistrate being obliged, as not to write his Laws in blood, like *Draco's*, so also not to execute them with cruelty, (though, where requisite, with severity) but to moderate them by the Law of Nature, other Laws, former Precedents, constant Customs, which hath the nature of Laws, or the reason and end of the Law, which is more equitable (and more Law, say some) than the Letter, and amongst Christians, by the written Laws of God, that there may be *convenientia pœne ad delictum*, or a proportioning Punishment to the quality of the Offence, all Circumstances (which the Law cannot possibly foresee or provide for) being duly considered. This includes all Superiors, Political, Ecclesiastical, Domestical, &c. and is frequently joyned with *Justice and Judgement* in Scripture, as executed both by God and Man, *Psal. 98. 9. & 99. 4. Isa. 11. 4. Prov. 1. 3. & 2. 19, 17. 26. Mich. 3. 9, &c.* Or secondly, that of private persons, (or publick in their private capacity) which is between party and party, when according

according to the rules of equity, we omit what the rigor of the letter of the Law would adjudge us, thereby neither injuring our selves or others, which is usually called *probitas*, or *honestas*; by us common *honesty* that should be 'twixt man and man. And hence some borrow it, and restrain it to that carriage the Law takes not cognizance of, in our meekness and gentleness, making it that single Virtue the Moralists call *mansuetudo*, we meekness. But though it be all these, yet 'tis also more, these not reaching the Latitude of the word *ἐπιεικεία*, nor the extent of the duty here enjoyed; the word being not used here in that strict sense the Philosophers use it, (as the learned *Grotius* well observes upon the place :) but for that equalness of Mind and Spirit that becomes us in our conversation, and diffuses it self through many, very many other actions, than are proper to these Virtues: and though sometimes restrained to this, or that particular kind of Moderation, yet in it's latitude (as the best Philosophers tell us) denotes *Mediocrity*, *Indifferency*, *Equality*, or the like. And in this general acceptation, which I may call the *Moral* or *Theological Sense*, not restraining it to (though not excluding) the *forensic* and stricter acceptation thereof, I shall through Gods assistance handle it; Therather, because our Judicious and Learned *Perkins*, hath in a peculiar little Tractate already spoken sufficiently to that particular, of the Moderation of Justice by the Magistrate, and private persons, in reference to their remitting from the rigour of the Law which every one may peruse, and I seriously wish they would also practise.

2. General now follows; *The exercise of Moderation*, wherein the case proposed is included, viz. *The exercise of Moderation*

Case, *Wherein must we practise Moderation.*

Which necessarily implies the *external object*, or about what our Moderation must be conversant, and appear to all; call it the *object* of the *Faculty* or of the *Action*, or of *Moderation*, when imployed in governing these, and so hath the same object with them (as is said before) it all comes to one.

And formally includes, 1. *What it is that we must Moderate*: or the *faculty*, or *principle*, of what kind soever internal and external, from which the action flows. 2. *In what Actions*. And 3. *How*, or the measure and proportion to be observed in such our actions. Which three are always distinct in themselves, though not always easily distinguishable to us, and therefore often seem coincident. I shall therefore join them together in the prosecution of the Case.

Ccc

For

For the general Object of Moderation, or about what it must be exercised and appear. Negatively.

1. *Not such things as are materially good.* About such things, or in such actions as are materially good, Moderation hath no place, because all the good we can possibly do, is too little, so that there can be no excess in these, and therefore no Moderation: for the Office of Moderation being to restrain excess; where there can be none of this, that can have no employment. *e. g.* we cannot believe in, hope, love God and Christ too much, nor hate sin, and Satan (as the School-men affirm) in regard of his wholly losing the Image of God too much. In all our internal religious duties, and actings of Grace, as such, no Moderation therefore can or ought to have place.

2. *Not about such things as are materially evil.* For herein we cannot be defective. Where the object is absolutely forbidden us, and no circumstances can make the action good, there we are wholly to abstain, or suppress the action, if in it, there being inordinacy in the principle or faculty; for though Moderation is to govern even the principle, yet not in the choice of its object, but in its exercise about a due object chosen that it exceed not. And though we call any great acting upon an undue object, or great omission towards due, immoderate, because of their excess, yet this is not properly immoderacy, for so every sin would be it formally, whereas those only which respect the moral quantity of our actions, are properly immoderacies. Both these sufficiently appear by what's said before.

Positively. But about such things as are in themselves of an indifferent nature, and neither absolutely commanded, as things materially good, or absolutely forbidden, as those materially evil, but only conditionally according to the circumstances we are in. Which though of an indifferent nature, yet become morally good or evil to us, as we are actually conversant about them. In these properly may be excess, in regard of which Moderation is to take place to restrain, and keep all within due bounds, being formally the *modification* (to use the School term for once) of such actions. Wherein we must carefully distinguish of the several formalities of the object, Grace and Nature being conversant about the same object, but not in the same respect.

For its exercise therefore, or what, wherein, and how we must practise it.

Which I shall speak of, 1. Absolutely in reference to our selves, for preserving peace within, as it is to be exercised towards the good and evils of this life.

2. Rela-

2. Relatively, or in relation to others for externall peace, wherein we must exercise it, in *Civil* and in *Religious matters*. The former I shall call *Moderation towards Things*, the latter towards *Persons*.

1. *Moderation towards Things.*

1. *First then for Moderation towards Things*, as it is absolutely taken in reference to our selves: this being so clearly injoyed in the Text, as appears not only by the word *invidia*, but the duty *modestia*; The Apostle not saying, use Moderation towards all men, but let it appear to all men, which even that which is internal doth in our external conversation. But though there be abundance of excellent fruit on this branch of Moderation; yet in regard I conceive that towards *Persons* principally intended, I will not stand to shake it down, but only point you out briefly the boughs, on which it especially grows, that you may gather it your selves, and proceed to the second, *Moderation towards others*, which I shall only prosecute afterwards in all the following discourse. Now the *good things* of this life being either *internal*, of the Mind, as Parts, Learning, &c. of the Body, as Health, Strength, Beauty and the like: or *External*, as the Riches, Honours, Relations, and lawfull pleasures of the World, and what comprehended under them: And the *evils* of this life, such as are contrary to these, as shallowness of Parts natural or acquired, Sicknes, Weaknes, Death, Defectmity, Poverty, losses of Friends or Estate, Infamy, Reproaches, Troubles, Wars, Hunger, Thirst, Nakednes, Imprisonment, Captivity, Banishment, and such like: we are towards these to exercise Moderation.

2. *Towards the good things of this life.* 1. *We must moderate our Judgments in the valuation of them.* As forbidden fruit must not be looked upon, so lawfull must not be judged by us more desirable than it is. As we may not undervalue these good things, and with the *Stoick* dispise and cast them away; so we must not over-value them, beyond their intrinsic worth and the ends for which God allows them, the end and use being the measure of every things estimation. For though every creature be good in it self, and some better in themselves, and to us than others: yet those that are the best, and best for us that the World affords, are still but creatures, who are most of them serviceable only to our bodies, that they may be serviceable to our Souls, in the service of our Heavenly Father: which when we too much estimate, we quickly fall to admire, and so bow down to them, and commit Idolatry with them. For an over-valuation of the Judgment, begets in us admiration, and so an over-valuation of them also in our affections. These

sensitive objects make such impressions upon our imagination when absent, and our passions when present, that if Grace and Reason moderate not our Judgement of them, our whole man becomes inflamed therewith, and violently carried out towards them, by an excessive admiration of their seeming excellency, love to them for the same, and desire after them, for their apprehended futableness, hope to obtain them, seeming possible, using means for obtaining them, and delighting and glorying in them. Therefore our Saviour prescribes wisely, that our hearts may not be in them, the light of our minds being single. *Matth. 6. 22, 23.* When *Archan* (*Josh. 7. 21.*) judged the Babylonish Garment goodly, and the Silver and Gold, then he quickly covered and took them. Let thy Moderation therefore begin here, and consider the character *Solomon* upon good experience gives them, that they are all to us in this degenerate state *Vanity of Vanities*, yea, *vexation of Spirit*.

2. *Moderate thy will and affections, in their love, desires, hopes, after the getting or keeping these things; according to the ends for which God allows them thee in particular, and with subordination to his Pleasure and Providence in the event.* We must value, love, desire, God and Christ, and hope in them, absolutely and for themselves, the Grace absolutely, but for the enjoyment of them (and consequently for our own happiness;) but so must we not these things, but only conditionally, as God in his All-wise disposing Providence sees meet to dispense to us, (he having so only promised them, and for those ends and so far forth as they are convenient for us, according to *Agars* desire, *Prov. 30. 8.* Which convenience is to be measured by the estate the Providence of God hath set us in, and the circumstances wherein we are. As so much health, strength, refreshment, comfortableness in our lives, as God sees good for us, and may render us serviceable to him; so much Food, Raiment, Profit, Pleasure as he pleaseth to bestow, and so far forth as convenient for us, according to our present condition, for our health, and other ends now mentioned, to which they refer; but neither these nor any other good things of this life absolutely, or for themselves, so as to make them our end and happiness, or to be fuel for our lusts, must we either love, desire, or hope for. It is not thus the desiring the lawful pleasures, profits, honours of this life, which *St. John* speaks of *1 Joh. 2. 16.* but the immoderacy of the desiring them which he calls *lust*, and saith *it is of the World*; as well he may, seeing this is the Trinity that it generally worshipeth more than the blessed Trinity of Heaven. Is it not the cry of many, nay most, *Who will show us any good?* but of how few,
Lord

Lord lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon us! Psal. 4. 6. How do men grasp at these things in their desires, which are as boundless as the Ocean, as craving as the Horseleach daughters still crying, Give, give; as unsatiable as the Grave; and as unsatisfied as Hell and Destruction, towards which they are travelling. What *Libanius* observed so long since, (and 'tis worth the observing) holds as true at this day. It's difficult, saith he, to meet with a man, satisfied and not complaining of his condition. If he want any bodily good, as Beauty, Strength, &c. or, if none of these, yet not thankful, if he want some of the mind, if he be not an Orator, Physician, skillful Commander, or the like. And especially in Riches and Honours. He that hath one Field, would have, and complains if he have not two; he that hath two, for four; he that hath ten, for twenty; and he that hath twenty, twice so many; and so on, no number satisfying his desire. For though it be great before, when we enjoy any thing, it then seems small to us; as one thousand talents of Gold, when we have them, are small to two, and two to ten, and so on. In Honours likewise, he that governs a City is not satisfied because he governs not the Nation, and if the Nation, that no more; as *Cyrus*, *Darius*, and *Xerxes*, mighty Princes, yet they wanted *Greece* they thought, which caused their Expeditions against it. Thus passing by still what we have, and reckoning what we have not, never think we enjoy enough. *Ἄνθρωποι καὶ ἀδικῶντες*, every one herein being injurious to God, not injuriously dealt with by him. Keep therefore thy heart, and moderate it that it break not out in these things with all diligence, lest the swarms of these lusts, what ever sweetness they seem to bring with them, sting thee to death.

3. Moderate thy pursuit and endeavours after the acquiring and retaining these, by the ends for which, and subordination wherewith thou mayest and oughtest desire them. Thus speaking only the execution of the former particular, must needs be accordingly bounded. What we may lawfully desire, that we may use lawful means to attain; and so far forth as we must desire, so far only must we use the means. We must seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness absolutely, and in the first place; then the things convenient for us in this life, according to their subserviency thereto, and his seeing good to bestow upon us. As it is the Statute Law of Heaven, that in the faith of our brows we should eat our bread, and should be our daily prayer, that our Father which is in Heaven would give us this day our daily bread, i. e. all things requisite and convenient; So is it that we should not lay up for our selves treasures upon earth, nor serve these as our Masters, nor take thought for our lives, what

what we shall out, or what we shall drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed (which three are the total sum all these externals amount to in their use) *Mat. 6. 19, 24, 25. &c.* Our blessed Saviour from the 19th verse of that Chapter, forbidding this immoderate pursuit in those negative precepts, which he prefaces with several cogent arguments and expostulations; and not absolutely, but so as they may be not our *Treasures* that we set our hearts upon, our *Masters* that we serve, when as they are but our Servants, and so as that we oppose them not to, and set them in competition with the *Treasures in Heaven*, and God our great *Master*, whom we ought to serve even in the following our employments for these; as appears *vers. 19, and 24.* nor absolutely our taking thought, but our too solicitousness about the choice of, and using means, and especially their event, and so consequently what shall become of us, if we be not blest but blasted therein, as appears by the word *μεγιστὴν*, in the last verse of the Chapter. And yet (alas!) after all this, how do we seek them as if they were our treasure, our happiness, our *all*? as if here was our continuing City, wherein we should alwayes live, and have these treasures, and none other to come that hath better? Though these be things after which the *Gentiles* seek, yet they will be excusable who know no better in comparison of thee and me, who know the true Pearl of price, are invited and called to better dainties, and yet make light thereof, one preferring his Farm, another his Merchandise, *Mat. 22. 5.* And yet though the generality of the *Gentiles* which had not the Gospel, as the *Jews* in our Saviours time, were so immoderate; yet many of them were such as appears by their works, and lives, as I fear will rise up in Judgement in this particular, against most of us that call our selves *Christians*. They beholding the busie World (as one of them speaks of the Souls in the other) as the Ant carrying a straw, or some little thing of like moment, into her hole in the Mole-hill; which yet dazzles our eyes with their seeming luster, and makes our hearts say of these our houses as if they were our homes, *'Tis good for us to be there.* *Mat. 23. 27.*

¶ 4. We must moderate our whole man in the use and enjoyment of these, in our seeing, delighting, rejoicing and glorying in them. We must not in coveting of them, exceeding the bounds within which they are allowed us; not in our love towards them, *1 John 2. 15. Love not the World,* neither the things that are in the World, by taking too much complacency and delight in them; not our rejoicing, *Eccles. 1. 9.* If thou dost, know, for all these things, God will bring thee to Judgement. Nay our Saviour when the Disciples returned with joy that the Devils were subject to them

them, Luk. 10. 17. which was a divine and extraordinary gift, calls them off, and shews them a fit matter of rejoycing, wherein they could not exceed; not absolutely forbidding, but limiting them with a *rather, but rather rejoyce that your names are written in Heaven*, v. 20. Nor in our glorying in them, Jer. 9. 23, 24. O what need of moderation here! In our eating, drinking, sleeping, lawful recreations, raiment; in the using of our parts, Learning, Riches, Honours, and other Creature-comforts! If the enjoyment of these outward things had been so considerable, think you our blessed Saviour, who could have commanded them, would have wanted them? What are the best of them? Are thy Riches any thing, but of the Earth, and earthly? Thy Pleasures any thing, but a little titillation of the flesh, of no permanent nature, lives but one instant and dies as fast? Thy Honour any thing, besides a hollow eccho, or noise, that, like the circle of the water, is but of little circumference, and soon gone? doth not every cross wind, or wave, break and dash it away? Is not he that's great in this City, scarce known in the next? He that's King in one Nation, unknown to many other Nations? How short lived, I pray? Have there not been many great ones we never heard of? Those we read; do we not skip their names often, not troubling our selves with the thought or remembrance of them? If we do, what are they the better? Read *Psal. 103. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18*. Nay, have not the greatest judgements of God followed excess in things lawful? I will trouble you with none but a few Scriptural Examples: Two of the greatest the World ever knew, the Flood, and destruction of *Sodom* and the rest of the Cities of the Plain; to what are they ascribed but Security and Excess? *They did eat, they drank, they married Wives, they were given in marriage*: What follows? *the Flood came and destroyed them all*, Luk. 17. 27. *Likewise in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded*, (all again things lawful in themselves) *but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all*, ver. 28, 29. If David took too much Pride and Glory in the number of his People, and fell to numbring them, God quickly follows with Pestilence, and makes them decrease seventy thousand, 1 Cron. 21. 14. If *Nebuchadnezzar* will vaunt *Is not this great Babylon that I have built, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty?* While the word is in his mouth there falls a voice from Heaven, *The Kingdom is departed from thee*, and he is turned to grass with the Oxen, Dan. 4. 30, 33. And his Son *Belshazzars* great Feast fills up the measure, for which he was that night slain, & his Kingdom taken, Dan. 5. 1, 30, 31. If the rich man will think thus, and

so will I do and say, *Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry*: He is not only stigmatized for a fool, but *this night shall thy Soul be required of thee* follows, *Luk. 12. 19, 20.* Nay, if the wicked servant begin to *eat and drink with the drunken*, his Lord will come unexpectedly, and *cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the Hypocrites*, *Mat. 24. 49, 51.* How great then this sin is, Gods judgments being always equal, and proportioned to our offences, what slight thoughts soever we may have of it, you cannot but by these Examples perceive; Nay rather what a big-bellied Monster is it? full of many deadly sins, of *Atheism, unbelief, Idolatry, carnal security*, preferring these things before God, Christ, Heaven, and happiness. Take heed and beware therefore herein, lest while they speak thee fair, they wound thy heart.

2. *Towards the evils of this life*; 1. *We must moderate our fears of these befalling us, according to the good they threaten to deprive us of.* As we must not fear these groundlessly, so when there is just cause, and apparent danger, we should not be senseless, and secure, nor fear all alike, or over-fear any Security is the fore-runner to destruction, *1. 7. bes 5. 3.* which these should awake us out of, but not so affect us, or fright us, as to put us past our selves and our duty; when the storm threatens us, we must not, with *Jonah*, be asleep, but praying and endeavouring, as the poor Mariners, for preservation; Or as the Disciples, *Lord, save us, we perish*; though they were too fearful, in regard of Christs being with them, who was sufficient security for their safety. There is a *provident fear*, that opens our eyes to foresee dangers, and quickens us in the use of lawful means for their prevention; such was the good Patriarch *Jacob's*, of *Esau* his destroying him and his company; that makes him pray, send presents to his brother, divide his bands, and use all prudent means of preservation, *Gen. 32.* this we must have: for security & putting far away the evil day, when God threatens us even with temporal Judgments, is a great sin, and hath a *Wo* pronounced upon it, *Amos 6.* whereas this makes us wisely serve the Providence of God. But then there is a *diffident fear* that distracts us, and cuts all the nerves and sinews of lawful care and endeavours, that brings a snare with it, (*Prov. 29. 25.*) and often drives us upon unwarrantable means, or makes us sit down in despair. This we must beware of, by a due moderating our fears according to the impendent evil, which must be judged by its opposite good. Not fearing all evils alike; the loss of some wealth like the loss of our health, because health is the better good; no nor all evils of the same kind alike, not a Tertian Ague like the Stone, this by its exquisite pain, depriving us more of the natural comfort

comfort of health, and more endangering our lives. And not overfearing the greatest, viz. *Death*, called by *Job* the King of Terrors, (15. & 14.) and by the Philosophers, *ποσιπτορ*, of all terrible, the most terrible; which our Saviour, as man, feared with a natural fear, yet charged we should not over-fear it, *Mat.* 10. 28. *Luke* 12. 4. Yea, though we should fear political or publick evils, as Wars, Famine, Pestilence, more than our own personal, (of which you see I speak only all along) in regard those are greater, the publick good being better, and to be preferred before any private, yet not these too much.

2. We must moderate our grief and trouble for those, according to the good we want or lose by them. There are imaginary evils, that are of our own creation, begot, brought up, & nourished only by our own brain; these we must carefully avoid, & if formed, not be cruel to our selves, in being compassionate to them, but dash them in pieces. And there are real evils, which come not forth of our own dust, nor spring out of the ground, but are from above, of Gods creating and framing. *Amos* 3. 6. *Isa.* 45. 7. *Jer.* 18. 11. These we are not to be senseless under, but duly affected with, and yet not over-affected, so as to murmur and repine, much less quarrel with God. A Stoical Apathy becomes us not, and yet better than quarrelling at Gods Providence, it coming nearer moderation; for wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin? *Lam.* 3. 39. Little reason, whilst thou art living, seeing it is less than thy desert and no reason even for Death and Hell, for they are but equal to thy desert; if thou confests thy self a sinner, thou must confests this. *Plato* said, that God doth *ἀνίσταται*, which is expounded by *Pintarch* *Sympos.* 1. 8. well; That God is said alwayes to act the Geometrician, in regard of Q. 2. his equal dealing with all men, in proportioning rewards and punishments to their deserts: And a greater than he, yea, the greatest that can be, God himself appeals to the sinners own Conscience, *Is not my way equal? Are not yours unequal?* *Ezek.* 18. which whole Chapter is a defence of his equity. Troubled then we may be, murmuring and discontented we must not be. Nay, troubled we ought to be, as the evils are greater or less, which must be judged by the good they deprive us of; more for publick, because that good is greater; less for private evils, because our own good is not equal to the communities. But in the body politick 'tis quite otherwise than in the natural body; we are usually too senseless under publick, and too sensible of, and immoderate under our own particular evils: rather apt to quarrel with God, like *Jonah*, for a *Gourd*, or some inconsiderable concerns of our own, than be troubled at the destruction of a great *Nineveh*; more troubled at our own houses

being on fire, or Child sick, than all our Neighbours in the City about us burnt and dead. Therefore Scripture accordingly calls for affection for the Publick, and forbids it in our own concerns, in regard we are generally defective in the former, and excessive in the latter. Nay, even towards others, when just cause of compassion, if excessive. So our Saviour, when the Women lamented his death, (which was matter of grief, as in respect of him, though of greatest joy in it self, as to them and the World) bids them, *Weep not for me, but for your selves, and your Children*, in regard of the publick calamities that were coming upon Jerusalem, *Mat. 23. 27, 28, 29*. Every particular being concerned in the community. Now of these evils, seeing all are privations of good; *Some are of the good we want and never enjoyed*, as deformity of body, defect in parts, constant poverty, &c. and here we must beware we judge not those evils, which are none, and so trouble and torment our selves without cause, and reproach our Maker, saying, *Why hath he made me thus?* Why am I no nobler born, no more beautiful made, no greater Heir, no quicker parted? Why am I not as such, or such, nor as they, this, or that? When thou hast what is suitable and convenient for thy condition, for this all may say of those that excel them (and the best of imaginary excellencies) as well as thou. *Other evils are of the good we have enjoyed, and are deprived of*; as want of health, losses of Friends and Estate, reproaches of our good name, imprisonment of liberty, and the like, which are incident to our present state. These are they especially which the World lament, and cry out after, as foolishly as *Micah*, (*Judg. 18. 14*) *Thou have taken away our Gods, and what have we more?* and sayest thou, *What aileth us?* We must not here be too passionately excessive, either in the degree or duration of our trouble; we must be affected with the providence of God in these evils, according to their greatness to us (a little loss in it self, may be great to a poor man; as the Widow's Mite was more to her, than their far greater sum was to them that cast them in; the death of an only Child greater than when a number) and so trouble and sorrow for them; but discontented we must not be, nor distracted in the duties God requires; nor refuse to be comforted, because our Husbands, Wives, Children, Pleasures, Honours, Riches are not; for as there is a time to weep, so a time to take up, and refrain from weeping; we must love them so, as we may lose them, that when we do, we may not lose our selves, *Amavi hac omnia tanquam amissurus*, let us every one say at parting with them, *I loved you so as I can lose you*. Take heed of murmuring with the Israelites, cursing thy Stars with the prophane; of discontentedness, which the best are apt to fall

fall into, nay, wish for death rather than life, as several of the Prophets. Maintain that equilibrious frame in thee, (as David, 2 Sam. 15. 26.) *Here I am, let God do to me as seemeth good to him*, which is the Mother of patience, and like it makes their evils (though not one, yet become) none to us.

Thus I have done with *moderation towards things*, most of whose particulars mentioned, you have prest by the Apostle Paul, and by the same Argument of the Text, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. *The time is short. It seemeth that both that have Wives, be as though they had none: & they that weep, as though they wept not: and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not: and they that buy, as though they possessed not: and they that use the World, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this World passeth away.* And though I have stood longer upon this than I intended, and promised both you and my self, in regard the fruit hung so thick about me, that I could not but pluck some of it, and after I had tasted it more, yet I hope it will prove so pleasant also to the taste, that you will pardon me; especially considering how much this Moderation towards things condueth to that which respects persons; (the contentions in the World arising usually from our want of Moderation to the things of the World, as in civil matters it is patent; & in religious, though less obvious, yet most frequently as certain, that these are the springs from which they flow) and how necessary it is for us all to know and practise it; for *licet in perimus omnis*, we usually perish by the hand of these lawful things.

2. Moderation towards Persons.

Having spoken of Moderation, as it respects our selves, for preserving peace within, (thus, as all Government, having *peace* for its end) which appears, and is made known to others by our Conversation; let us now look abroad, as we are members of the publick, and have to do with others, and see what Moderation we must use for the preserving *external peace*. Now each Christian having a double capacity, as a *Man* his civil capacity in the *State*; as a *Christian*, his religious capacity in the Church wherein he lives: I shall speak to both these, in reference to Peace *Political* and *Ecclesiastical*; to the former more briefly, being so near a kin to that part we have already dispatched.

I. In civil matters.

Herein we may be considered, *Actively* or *Passively*. 1. *Actively*. We must moderate our speeches, that we give no just provocation thereby, according to prudence. That we may neither provoke those of whom, or to whom we speak, we must duly consider the nature of the matter we speak of, and the quality and temper of the persons concerned.

In our discourses with others; not trifling in weighty matters, and fervent in trifles of no moment; nor rashly to thy Superiors, without respect, nor superciliously to thy Inferiors, nor contentiously to thy equals; we also must have regard to their temper, if passionate and angry, with soft, not grievous words; or if tender and meek-spirited, with the like, (for these two different tempers must be alike, though for different ends dealt withal); if contumacious, more sharply; if flexible, gently; if ready or jealous, more tenderly and cautiously; if equal, with more freedom and liberty; and so of all others. Yea, we must also observe their present condition, if distressed, or joyful and comfortable, and the like; and the disposition they are in, (which for the most part is lutable thereto) as sad and dejected, or cheerful and pleasant, beyond their accustomed temper, and accordingly moderate our speeches, as the wise Man adviseth, *Prov. 25. 20.* At no time stirring up contention, or speaking Swords and Darts, but as the Wife, whose tongue is healib, *Prov. 18. 6. & 12. 18.*

In our judging, characterising, and censuring of others; we must also consider for what, of whom, and to whom we do it; not for every failing, and weakness, or miscarriage, nor upon slight grounds; not readily taking up a reproach against our Neighbour, and rashly venting it, *Prov. 10. 12.* nor jealously framing one, and according thereto passing verdict; for though there be a charitable and godly jealousy, we may exercise towards those we have special interest in, or charge over, such as St. Paul's towards his *Corinthians*, (*2 Cor. 11. 2.*) and Job his Children, (*1. 5.*) in reference to our admonishing, or other dealings with them, yet not so our judging and censuring them to others. And when the carriages of others are such as no due candor can excuse, we must rather interpret them better, than aggravate them as worse, according to the favour of charity to the Offender, though in no wise to the Offence. Nor this without necessity, nor to every one blazoning others, nor of all alike, without respect to quality, age, temptations, and the like; of which, and all other circumstances, consideration must be had, and due allowance made.

In our rebuking and reproving of others; we must likewise see, that it be a matter to deserve, and consider the persons we so deal with. (In counsel and admonition, though prudence be required, yet in them we assume not so much to our selves, nor apt so passionately to miscarry.) Great need of this in Superiours, Masters especially towards Servants, and Schollers, that they deal with them according to their dispositions, forbearing, (or as the Greek, moderating) threatening, *Ephes. 6. 9.* and *Prov.*

Prov. 11. 24. and Parents often towards Children; *Fathers provoke not your Children, lest they be discouraged*, Colof. 3. 21. And as great need of Superiors moderating their passion towards Inferiors, so great need of these using prudence towards those and their equals; *Rebuke not* (therefore saith Paul to Timothy, 1 Tim. 5. 1.) *an Elder, but intreat him as a Father, and the younger men as Brethren.*

2. *We must moderate our contests with others according to equity.* So long as sin, Satan, and *meum & tuum, thine and mine*, are in the World, there will be strife and contention about the things of the World. And where interest engages us, we are subject to be byast thereby, and drawn away by our passions from all equality. Great need therefore of Moderation here: [1. *In considering the matter, that is be of moment, and the person we have to do withal, whether faulty; and not about toys, and rashly with any that's next us, we think upon the blush guilty, enter the lists of contention and strife. Go not forth hastily* (saith Solomon) *to strive, lest thou knowest not what to do in the end thereof; when thy Neighbour hath put thee to shame*, Prov. 25. 8. [2. *If so, In trying by all fair means the obtaining thy right*, whether of estate, good name, honour, or the like, by arguments and perswasions, by seeking accommodation, by willingly referring it to the equal judgment and determination of others, or the like. *Agree* (saith our blestest Saviour, Mat. 5. 25.) *with thine Adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him*, (i. e. to the Magistrate; as Luke expounds it, 12. 58.) *lest at any time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison.* [3. *If these will not prevail for thy right, In voluntary yeelding some part thereof, rather than contest.* It must be thy own right thou must yeeld, not anothers, (except thou be intrusted therewith, and so far forth as he consents thereto); for this being a Gift, must be of such things as are our own, which thou oughtest to do for peace-sake. How eminent was Abraham for this, (Gen. 13. 8, 9.) who stood not upon his terms of superiority with Lot, though his Uncle and Guardian formerly and Governor, nor his right, nor his Nephews first seeking to him, and the like, but that there might be no strife, offers him his choice of the Land; *If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left*; and performs accordingly. How far are we from following our Father Abraham's example! how many that will not yeeld others any of their right, but by compulsion of Law! how few that yeelds their own right voluntarily! How far, or how much we must yeeld, our own, and those we deal with, circumstances best determine,

mine. We must not be injurious to our selves; for as St. *Austin* saith well, *Quis alius aqunt, qui sibi iniquus? Who that's unequal to himself, will be equal to others?* We must not yeeld that which is greatly to our detriment, except our yeelding be on as easie terms as further contesting, (as it proves often when we proceed to Law, &c.) and here that may be very considerable to one, that is but small to another, as poorer or richer, for matters of estate, as entering the stage of the World, or well known in it, for credit and good name, &c. And very considerable to the same man at one time, that may be small at another, as if upon preferment to have reports made of him, or the like. Nay, there may be grounds for not yeelding the least we can possibly obtain, which we must conceal from the Publick, (though we may satisfie private Christians) as when we know our estate is small, though (living upon credit) others judge it great, or the like cases. But here's not such difficulty, every one knowing his own circumstances, for the most part, pretty well, (which should be a ground for our charity, that we censure not men whose circumstances we know not); nor are we apt to miscarry in departing from our own interest. We should especially therefore consider the condition and circumstances those are in we have to do withal: If greater, we usually make a vertue of necessity, and yeeld most where we should yeeld least: but here, in our speeches and carriages, we should especially yeeld, and least we can of our purses, and on the contrary, if they be meaner and poorer. Not when others are low, or in present exigencies, to take them by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest, (*Mat. 18. 28.*) but to be equal, merciful, and considerative of others as well as our selves, and accordingly to deal.

4. If all thou must yeeld will not satisfie, *In thy chargeable appeal to the Civil Magistrate.* As all lawful means must be assayed for publick Peace, before by War appeal be made to God; so should all lawful means be used before we appeal to his Vice-gerent, for private peace. And when we do, with charity to the person against whom we proceed; for 'tis a great mistake to think we cannot be in Charity and Law together. And though, with vigilance and circumspection, yet not with violence and passion to mannage the prosecution. Lastly, *In the issue or end of Appeals.* If we overcome, *In admitting equal compensation for the loss of Riches, Credit, or the like thou contestst about.* For some mens natures, others necessities, are such as make them obstinate, and persist to their ruine and destruction; and Laws in some things are severe (though just) which though the Magistrate moderate according to equity, yet often adjudge more than we should take. And if thou be overcome

overcome and lose thy right; by no means seek revenge, or right thy self; but use Moderation, in committing thy Cause to him that judgeth righteously.

3. We must moderate our whole carriage and conversation towards others, according to the rules of modesty and sobriety; Prov. 25. 6. Avoid all occasions of giving just offence to others. Seek peace, and pursue it, but fly occasions of quarrelling and strife, lest the wrath both of God and man pursue thee. Consider that not only hatred and wrath, but variance, emulation, and strife, are reckoned amongst the works of the flesh, which they that do, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God: whilst peace, long-suffering, gentleness, and meekness (fruits of the Spirit) shall, Gal. 5. 20. — 23. Let not thy immodest looks efface others modesty, nor thy gestures offend their gravity. For St. Ambrose extends this Moderation to gestures, gait, and bodily motions; speaking also his own

Office, l. 12.
c. 18.

experience herein, how he refused to admit one into Orders, merely for his immodesty in these. Let not then any taunting Jest, bitter Sarcasms, or any other words, or mynical Gestures, foolish Wagers, Recreations, or the like, become snares to entrap thy peace with others. Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, (or grave and venerable *gravia*) whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things, speak these things, do these things, and the God of Peace shall be with you, Phil. 4. 8, 9.

2. Passively. Thus we are considered in our suffering from others; wherein, as we must cordially forgive them all, Math. 6. 15. So in our carriage, we must moderate our Spirits, Passions, Speeches, Actions, and punishing thereof, towards those that are the offenders.

1. We must moderate our spirits, by an equal bearing with the weaknesses and natural infirmities of others. He that has no rule over his own spirit, is like a City that is broken down, and without Walls, Prov. 25. 28. i. e. soon overcome. We must consider their years, as the fervor of youth, teastiness of old age, their temper: some are more dull and stigmatick, others more melancholly and suspicious; some more cholerick and boysterously passionate, others more agil quick and sprightly: their Education, some are with study morose, others, according to those they converse with, more rude, or complemental and courtly; according to which, and their present condition, we should give due grains of allowance, in our speeches and conversations towards them, and retain our equality of mind, as the Orator said, *Tranquillus animus meus, qui*

aqui boni facit omnia, [1. By a prudent dissembling them, 1 Sam. 10. 27. [2. By a charitable covering them, Prov. 10. 12. [3. Interpreting them; not putting any sinister interpretation, but most favourable, not aggravating the offence, 1 Cor. 13. 5, 6, 7. [4. Admonishing them, Mat. 18. 15. Gal. 6. 1. [Lastly, Pardoning them; *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another*, &c. Colos. 3. 13.

2. *We must moderate our passions in their due exercise, in case of greater and wilful offences, according to the nature and quality thereof.* Our anger towards such Offenders, aversion of them, severity with them, and the like; avoiding of, and suppressing all wrath, envy, malice, revenge, and the like sinful passions, that have the stamp of Hell upon them, (James 3. 15.) which come thence, and lead thither, Gal. 5. 20, & 21. In Gods cause we must be angry, against sin; and in the publicks, against the impediments of peace and truth, Neh. 5. 6. Acts 17. 16. (but these I am not speaking of) in our own we may be angry, but we must not sin. Ephes. 4. 26. *Whoever is angry with his Brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the Judgement*, saith our blessed Saviour, Mat. 5. 22. In which three things are considerable. 1. With whom, and that's clearly the Offenders, not every one that's next us. 2. For what, Which the Philosopher, and all acknowledge, difficult to determine, being in particulars; the only help is from the consideration of the quality of the offence. 1. Not for every trifle, but material in its self, or in its consequence. 2. Not for natural defects and weaknesses, as when they are slow of parts, weak of strength, or the like, and can do no better; (here we may find fault, and admonish gently to quicken, not be angry, to discourage those we have power over, or interest in). 3. Nor for purely involuntary, and casual offences, such as no due circumspection could prevent, but for errors and mistakes which might have been avoided, carelessness and negligence in the doing or omission; wilfulness or maliciousness in the end for which others offend us. When these appear, and as they appear more or less, we may be angry; least for the first, more with the next, and most with the last of wilfulness and malice. Lastly, The measure of our passion is considerable, which must not be beyond the nature of such offences, in the degree or duration. *Be angry, and sin not*, (the same words in the Original, the Septuagint renders, Psalm. 4. 4. by, *stand in awe, and sin not*; when we are angry with others, we had need stand in awe of God that we sin not) *let not the Sun go down upon thy wrath, neither give place to the Devil*, Ephes. 4. 26, 27. i. e. we must neither too deeply, nor too long be angry, lest the Devil

Devil, who is ready at hand to take occasion thereat, to blow us all into a flame of Wrath, Malice, Revenge, and what not; all which are to be wholly avoided.

3. We must moderate our speeches and actions towards such wilful Offenders. *By no means rendering railing for railing, or evil for evil, but overcoming evil with good.* Oh that our blessed Saviour's known Precept was but as well known in the practice! *Mat. 7. 44, &c.* and that his Copy was but writ after by us; how would the World be reformed thereby! If those many places of holy Scripture, of forbearing, and forgiving one another, under the penalty of damnation, were duly believed, they would marvelously restrain men at least, and becalm the World. But let's see our practice.

1. *By a prudent silence, or slighting the presumption of Offenders of us, when secret, or not greatly to our detriment.* Not to hearken or regard every reproach, scorn, contempt that's cast upon us, nor every trespass of our Neighbour, *2 Sam. 16. 10. The discretion of a man defers his anger, and he is his glory to pass over a transgression, Prov. 19. 11.* It is his glory, not only as it shews a spirit above such dealings, but wisdom many times more ashaming and silencing such thereby, than by our contending with them.

2. *By yielding to the unequal demands of others for peace, wherein we are solely concerned, and not greatly prejudiced.* How eminent is our Saviour's example herein, who though free from tribute, yet rather than he would offend, works a Miracle for the solution thereof, *Matth. 17. 27.* He fairly shews first that he is so, and then notwithstanding pays, whose wisdom and practice herein let us follow.

3. *By admitting equal compensation, or less than our wrong, for such manifest injuries, as we may and ought to right our selves in, when the Offender is willing to make us satisfaction.* If in our Reputation, let's not insist too much upon the punctilio's of honour; if in estate, upon the strict terms of right; but herein observe the the golden Rule, by putting off self, and putting on thy Neighbour, doing to him as thou wouldst he should do to thee, *Mat. 7. 12.* Nay, in real wrongs of estate, we should, in case of their incapacity of recompencing, accept for present verbal satisfaction, till they be better enabled, and if never, to lose all, rather than by imprisonment, or otherwise, to bring upon them (and often theirs also) utter destruction, *Matth. 18. 29. 30.* For the Moralist well *τὸ δίκαιον ἵστω*, but not *τὸ ἰσὼν δίκαιον*, though all *Plut. Symp.* Justice be equal, yet all equality is not Justice, but that which is proportioned to persons.

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4. Lastly, *We must moderate our prosecution of such injuries and wrongs, as we ought to vindicate our selves from, and see punished.* Though we must forgive all injuries, as to our selves, by charity to others; yet we may, nay, we must in some cases have so much charity, also to the Publick, and our selves, that in notorious injuries, we should do right to both, in the prosecution of such Offenders, as will not otherwise be restrained, or do us right. If thy Brother sin against thee, not only seven, but seventy seven times a day, thou must forgive him, *Matth. 18. 22. i. e.* If he frequently wrong and injure thee. (for so the word *sinning*, when against us, signifies, as the *Sept.* 1 *Sam.* 19. 4. *Gen.* 42. 22. and elsewhere frequently use the *greek* words, *ἀντιπαρὶ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτάνει*, *If any man trespass against his Neighbour*, that is, injure or wrong him) yet thou must constantly forgive him; but notwithstanding thou mayest seek thy right from him, and if by no fair means canst obtain it, prosecute him before the Magistrate for the same. *Nay, thou not only mayest, but sometimes must.*

1. *When God is concerned therein, as in the Churches right.* Thus *Moses*, though the meekest man upon earth, would not abate *Pharaoh* an hoof, (*Exod.* 10. 26.) for thereof must we serve the Lord, (saith he) and we know not what, until we come thither, i.e. *Canaan*. A Minister may yeeld his own, but he must not the Churches right.

2. *In case of trust from others.* Either from the Publick, or private persons, which allow us not to make terms of concession, but stand upon strict justice and right. Here, so far as others consent which are proprietors, we should compose, yeeld, and take up controversies; further we justly cannot: for in cases of trust, a man must be regulated by the will of those that intrust him, as Arbitrators and Solicitors for others. So Executors frequently, and Guardians, that are intrusted for those that are young, and not yet, *sui juris*, at age to consent, and dispose of their own, and the like cases, wherein the intrusted are responsible for what is not legally done therein; the Laws determination being by all presumed just.

3. *In our own personal injuries, wherein the Publick is concerned.* 1. When publick Peace, Order and Government, are much violated and broken thereby. As in notorious Thefts, attempts of Murder, and the like; which if tolerated, the World would become a great *Latrocinium*, and Slaughter-house, wherein the longest Sword, and strongest Arm, would sweep away all; a place for Beasts, but no quiet habitation for Men. 2. When the publick emolument or estimation suffers in our injuries. As Magistrates, Ministers, and all others employed in publick Affairs, when

when grossly defam'd, so as the Publick is thereby reflected on; ought fairly to vindicate their integrity, so far at least, that those that employ them, and the Publick suffer not thereby. And lastly, When thy serving the Publick, and consequently the publick Good is thereby hindred. How ample is the Apostle *Paul* in his own vindication against the false Apostles defamation of him, in his second Epistle to the *Corinths*, which is much of it Apologetical. And good reason, for where the person is traduced, his employment is not likely to be much effectual, or advantageous to the Publick, and his Example less; as *Quintilian*, L. 2. Instit. c. 3. and many others, yea, constant experience tells us. In these cases thou must do thy self justice, but so moderately, as not doing to others injustice thereby.

In all other meerly personal wrongs and injuries, when they are considerable in themselves, or their issue to *thee*, provided thou canst no other way obtain right, thou mayest publicly prosecute thine Injurers, Oppressors, publick Defamers, and the like wrongers of thy Estate, Reputation, and other thy temporal good things; in charity, and according to equity, equally seeking thy own right and good, not thy Neighbours wrong, much less tune and destruction. And thus for moderation towards others in civil matters.

In Religious Matters.

Although I have spoken in the opening the nature of Moderation, and the *general Object* that which might serve to direct us herein: Yet lest I be mistaken, and thence any of you mistake your duty; I shall further open this *particular Object*, by speaking to it negatively about what Moderation is not to be practis'd, and positively wherein it must.

Negatively. 1. *Not in matters of Faith.* For the believing these, being not onely absolutely required of every Christian, and in that measure that we cannot fully come up to, in regard of the great truth and reality of spiritual Objects, and their Revelation, (the best being (alas!) miserably short and deficient herein:) but also internal, (the profession of these being matter of practice) Moderation cannot possibly here have any place, much less that which respects others.

2. *Nor in matters of moral practice,* such as the moral Law requires, and grace and virtue should perform. For in these can be no excess, either in degree or duration. We cannot love God too much, nor with Grace our Neighbour, nor too constantly. Consider Father, Mother, Wife, Children, as *moral Objects*, so we exceed not, as *natural Goods*; and so in the exercise of natural affection, we frequently (as is said before) do exceed,

ceed, which is discernable especially by the end; with Grace we love them for God; with the moral virtue of love, for the relation they stand in to us; with the affection of love, when we sinfully over-love them for our loves: for though the natural affection co-operates with the former, yet it solely exceeds. But it being difficult for us to discern these formalities in Objects, and the operations of Principles about them, it is our only way to have recourse to God's Laws, (which though founded upon the nature of things, yet shew us plainly our duty, where we cannot discern them) which, in all things wherein we may exceed, (as in the Externals of the first Table, and the duties of the second) not only prescribe us what, and also particularly how to act by positive Precepts; but, lest we should miscarry, by Negative also, which respect the end, manner, measure, &c. of such duties, restraining and bounding us that we exceed not. Both which are Moral, and comprehended in this particular, it being equally moral not to over-love, as to love thy Neighbour; the former being forbidden, as well by the Negative, as the latter enjoined by positive Precepts.

In Negatives, which forbid the action *absolutely*, (as Blasphemy, Adultery, &c.) no need of any such Precepts to regulate us; for the actions being not to be done, no need of direction for their manner, and consequently no place for Moderation; such being to be subdued, and suppressed, not ordered or regulated, as I have formerly spoken, and in things onely *indefinitely* forbidden, (as Swearing, Travelling on the Lord's day, &c.) when we are to practise them, we have the Rules for Positive Actions, Affirmative, and Negative, to direct us sufficiently.

3. Nor especially in the weightier matters of the Law or Religion I must speak a little to this; because that may be commanded *absolutely* in itself, which *comparatively*, when it comes in competition with other duties of greater moment, becomes onely conditional. For affirmative Precepts are so many, it is impossible they should bind *ad semper*; so that when two or more duties come together, man, in regard of his finite capacity, being not able to perform them at once, must duly consider the weightiest, and that do; it being requisite, in terms of inconsistency, that the lesser alwayes give place to the greater, and cease *pro hic & nunc*, or for that present to oblige us. Thus David's eating the Shew-bread, and the Disciples plucking the Ears of Corn on the Sabbath day, when hungry, is defended by our Saviour, *Mat. 12*. Yea, even frequently the externals of the first Table, give way to the weighty exigent duties of the Second, (as the sanctification of the Sabbath,

to the defending the City in the *Machabees* case). according to that, *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, Hos. 6. 6.* Not only rather than sacrifice, but in such cases not sacrifice. God dispensing with the lesser, so that its omission becomes no sin; as is clear, in our Saviours practice, in his healing the man with the withered hand, &c. as well as in his defence of his Disciples, *Luk. 6.* For that may be our duty, and necessary at one time, which at another (when a weightier comes that should take place) ceaseth to be so, by vertue of the reason and constitution of the Laws themselves, that the Superiour Law take place.

Therefore under the notion of moderation, to omit moral, and especially the great and necessary duties required, and practise only the less, is Pharisaical Hypocrisie, not Christianity. If to do the great duties of Religion, God requires of us, be accounted immoderateness, let us say with *David, If this be to be vile, we will be more vile still.* God's Laws admit of no *exemption*, or dispensation from us, but what he hath admitted himself, we must neither add or detract, *Deut. 4. 2.* Thou canst neither mitigate their execution, nor any other besides himself, on thee for thy transgressing them. If the wise *Romans* were so careful to preserve their Laws from others, than the supream dispensing with them, lest they should prove a *Lesbian* rule; much more the Great and Wise God hath reason to keep up the authority of his Laws, and expect our punctual observance of them. Moderation in Religion, and religious Duties, is the devilish Precept of *Machiavel*, not the Doctrine of the Gospel, or *St. Paul.* To engage or wade no further in Religion, than temporal interests will permit us to come safely again to shore, was the resolution and speech of a greater Courtier of *France*, than of Heaven: and of such as resolve more to save their Skins than their Souls. How doth Christ every where arm those that will be his Disciples, against their desisting from their necessary duty, for the offence of the World? Is so far from concealing this, that it is the first thing he tells them of, invites them upon no other terms than the Cross; tells them, they must trust him in this World, for compensating them in the future, &c. *Mat. 16.* from 24, to ult. And how eminent was he in the practice of this? How did the zeal of God's House eat him up, and he persist in doing the work he was sent about, notwithstanding all the offence the Jews took? And yet in his own private concerns, how meek, gentle, patient, which none can be ignorant of that read the Gospel, and which he commands us to learn of him, *Mat. 11. 18.* Great then is the mistake of those that think Zeal and Moderation (which were thus eminently concerned in Christ) should be inconsistent. No lovelier match than of this blessed couple

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couple in our Souls; nor of more universal use to us throughout the course of our lives, if rightly ordered, the one for God, the other for the World; that giving life and intenseness in our duties towards him, this restraining us in our personal Concernments; that edging and quickening us in desires, motions, and endeavours for Heaven, and this stopping us, and retarding the Wheels, when we drive too furiously after our own interests: that, according to knowledge, supplying us with resolution for, and fervor in the great Duties of Religion; this, according to charity, duly qualifying them in the less; that our love to God, and one another, may walk hand in hand Heaven-ward, and neither leave the other behind.

Positively. It must then be in matters of Opinion, and Christian Liberty, and Indifferency, as they all refer to practice. And here let none expect I should determine what things are onely matters of Opinion, Liberty, and Indifferency, (which so much trouble the World) what not; For every one herein must, according to the Scriptures, be in some respect Judge for himself and his own practice, *1 Cor. 10. 29. Rom. 14. 4, 12.* Upon which I shall proceed, and shew our moderation, in *Principles, Passions, Speeches, and Practices.*

1. *We must moderate our Principles or Judgements concerning these, by forming them according to the nature of Truths and Duties.* This is necessary, not only in regard of our selves, (for as the judgement, such is the practice) but others also, for the moderating our prejudices towards them. We must therefore carefully distinguish between matters of Faith, and necessary Duty; and matters of Opinion, and conditional Practice. For though every ray of truth be excellent in it self, & absolutely there be no *minimum in Religione*, as the Heathen said; yet comparatively there is great difference in Truths, some differing from others, as one Star from another in glory. Nor have all the like clearness of revelation, nor shine forth with that lustre as others, nor all alike consequence. Some are *speciosa veritas*, great in themselves, clear to us, and weighty in their consequence, *Mat. 23. 23.* These we must hold fast, practice carefully, contend for earnestly, *1 Tim. 1. 19. 2 Tim. 1. 13. Jude 3.* Others are such, as *salva Religione*, we may, and do differ in, both in judgment and practice, without the endangering our happiness, *For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 14. 17. i.e.* In the opinion or practice of those, the false Apostles would have obtruded as necessary. In these things, our Principles should give us leave to meet one another in our Practice; keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the former, and the Bond of Peace

by

by the latter, as the Apostle enjoyns, *Ephes. 4. 3.*

2. *We must moderate our passions in these, our heat and fervor for them, our anger against those that differ from us in them.* In these things, where- in the way to Heaven is broad enough, there may be difference without division; and let any take heed how they straiten it, taking upon them to be wiser than Christ, who well knowing humane frailty, so chalked it out to us, telling us, *He that doth the Will of his Father* (not that is for or against these things) *is his Brother, Sister, and Mother*; and consequently should be Brethren and Sisters amongst themselves. It is strange to consider, how upon principles and prejudice once sucked in, Passion blinds men in their own opinions and practices, and what woful divisions hath in all Ages arisen thence? That the Eastern and Western Churches, wherein were so many Grave, Holy, Learned, and Wise Men, should so fall out as to make a separation; every one would be ready to think and say, Surely it was some great matter that occasioned it; would you know? nothing but about the time of the observation of *Easter*. Though *Irenaeus* & others were mighty Advocates for Peace, yet nothing would serve *Vilior Bishop of Rome*, but exact Uniformity in these indifferences; and thence arose, about two hundred years after Christ, that great breach of Unity betwixt those two great and famous Churches. How doth all the zeal and fervor we should bestow upon the great things of Religion run out at this time amongst us about these things! May not I say, *Quorsum hac perditio?* Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Why do we stand thus busily hewing good Timber into Chips; and leaving out the Figures, spend our time in the bare Cyphers? How many, on both sides, at this day, make it their Religion to be for or against those things that they account indifferent in themselves? So true is the *Moralists* observation, that the Devil alwayes labors, *That mankind may either wholly neglect a Deity, or be wholly taken up in the Externals of Worship.* Quite contrary to Scripture, that teacheth us to mind every thing as of consequence in its place; to do the great and weighty things, and not to leave the other undone. *My beloved, the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God:* When *Elijah*, that good Prophet, was discontented, *1 King. 19.* and passionately requests he may die, *v. 4.* and professeth his zeal for the great things of Religion, *v. 10.* God passeth by him, but in the great and strong Wind, or in the Earthquake or in the Fire the Lord was not, but in the still small voice, *v. 11, 12.* shewing him, and us thereby, that he is not in our Passions; and if not for the great, how much less for these things of Religion; wherein

wherein the Apostles rule for peace and edification (*Rom. 14. 19*) should be observed. God never suspended his Churches peace upon these: for if I should not love others, till I knew they were of all my opinions, and my practice in these, I might perhaps never love any.

2. *We must moderate our speeches, in our discourses of, debates and contests for or against these.* Some speeches we are too apt to, we must wholly forbear, others we must moderate. 1. We must beware of judging and censuring others for these. We may, in apparent transgressions of Gods Law, censure upon occasion the Offenders, though not rashly, or for Hypocrites, Reprobates, or the like; but for these we must not at all, *Rom. 14. 4. &c.* For in these, through anothers knowledge that may not be a sin in him which would to thee, and thou judgest sinful therefore in others for want of charity. How much malice, and how little candor do we use in this! How do we almost make it the characteristical note of Christianity, to be of such or such a way which none account essential to Religion! We are apt (as those in *Africa*, in *Tertullians* time) to account it enough, that we or others are of such a Party; and to impale the Church, and inappropriate Christ and Salvation every one of us to our own side. And this many times the most, by the Vulgar: so true is that of *Seneca*, *Qui pauca respiciunt, facile pronunciant*; Those that discern the least, being apt to judge most. 2. We must take heed of despising and condemning others for these, *Rom. 14. 3.* As the former of not judging, so this of not despising, is a necessary duty internally as to ourselves, and in our carriage and speeches especially, as they respect our external duty towards others; our sinning in both arising from uncharitableness, in that to others liberty, in this to that we judge their weakness. Our hearts and tongues are too apt to follow our judgments, and break out in these exorbitancies; but, *my Brethren*, these things ought not so to be; judge not, censure not according to outward appearance, or inward prejudice, but righteous and charitable judgment, rather that we mutually bear with one another in these. And when we have occasion to discourse or debate concerning what things are such, or their practice; not measuring all mens judgments by the model of our own apprehensions; or like Dictators, thinking our selves infallible, obtrude those things for necessary, which it may be, others of as piercing sight account but indifferent; or those things for indifferent, which they reckon amongst the number of unlawful; but modestly declaring our judgments herein. For, as I told you in the entrance, I take not upon me to determine what are such, nor the Magistrates duty, (concerning which, I think he said well and wisely, *That*

it were good they require as little as they can, (what's necessary for the safe-guard of Religion, as contained in the Scriptures) and Subjects practise as much as they can) but onely for the direction of every one how to order their conversation in the diversity of Judgments that are amongst us.

4. *We must moderate our practising of these, according to the circumstances we are in, and as they are convenient and expedient for us.* Sometimes the practice of these must be wholly waved; for the Laws concerning them being conditional, as to their doing or not doing, (though not as to the manner thereof) and not absolute, as of necessary duties, their practice becomes suspended on such conditions; which (besides that I formerly mentioned, viz. when they come in competition with greater matters) are especially three. In regard of our selves, dissatisfaction of *Conscience*; In regard of others, *known scandal*, and *disturbance of publick settled peace*. When any of these cases occur, wherein the condition on which the command is suspended is wanting, the command there (as all other conditionals) becomes *negative*. For we are obliged absolutely in moral duties to do them, and for the manner rightly, they being no wayes suspended as to practise; but in these only absolutely for the manner, that if we do them, we do them rightly; and conditionally, if we be satisfied in our judgments, and offend not others thereby, or disturb the publick peace; the first being knowledge in our selves, the other two charity to others, if we do them. And therefore where there is no place left for charity to others, as in case of equal scandal on both hands, thy doing or forbearing, there thou art at liberty. In which case, in smaller matters, that which is least observable is best; in greater matters, according to thy concernments, and charity to thy self, and for general good, (if the Publick be interested in thee). For when we cannot know on which side, our doing, or not doing, most evil to others lies, charity to our selves preponderates supposals of the issue.

But time permits me not to launch out into Discourses of these cases, my Subject also confining me to the exercise of Moderation, which when the action is to be wholly omitted, is not required, its office being only (as I have often said) in the regulating of actions. As we must therefore use modesty in our speeches for or against these, so also in our practising them according to conveniency and expediency; not too violently running our selves out of breath, or a tilt at others, in our practising them, but with that equalness of spirit and candor towards others as becomes us, *Rom. 14. 19, & 23. 1 Cor. 11. 16.*

Fff

Thus

Thus I have done with the *Case*, wherein I have been too large (I confess) in the whole, though perhaps too short in several particulars, and I hope not very tedious in any. A little more time for that which remains, will give a release to my pains and your patience.

The Persons. For the third General, the Persons. [1. *Who* must exercise this Moderation, and that's in a word, *all*. [2. *To whom*, and that's also *all* with whom we have to do, of all ranks, degrees, and qualities, Superiors and Inferiors, as well as Equals, of all tempers and carriages; not only to the gentle, but also to the froward; not only to Friends, and those equal and fair to us, for then what singular thing do we? but to those that are, or we repute our Enemies, that despitefully hate us, and injuriously persecute us, as our Saviour teacheth, *Mat. 5. 44.* [3. *Before whom*, and that's exprest in the Text, *all men*; our conversation in all the good and the evil things of this life, and towards all; must to all that see, and observe, or hear thereof, be known to be moderate.

Reasons. The fourth General, or the equity of this Command, which I shall shew for that towards persons, (waiving that towards things, both in this, and application, (as I told you) being by many sufficiently handled) in three particulars.

1. *This is no other than what God himself exercises towards us*; In all his dealings with mankind, from the fall, to the consummation and end of the World. This doth eminently, and alwayes will appear, so that good reason we should do it, *That we may be the Children of our Heavenly Father*, (*Mat. 5. 45.*) who spareth us continually, when we offend and sin against him. If God was not more moderate than man, the World would quickly crack about our ears; for if man had power to his will, it would scarcely be habitable; but he that hath power, if he should but exercise it even justly, and not use moderation, it would no longer be inhabited. *Thou wicked Servant, I forgave thee all, shouldst not thou have had compassion on thy fellow-servant?* *Mat. 18. 32, 33.*

2. *Christ did use Moderation eminently towards us, and hath left us his example to follow, in our exercising it towards one another.* Though he was equal with God, yet made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross, *Phil. 2. 7.* whose example how pathetically doth the Apostle urge, *v. 1, 2.* *That nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, esteeming others better than our selves; not looking every man on his own things, but the things of others.* *v. 3, 4.* likewise *Mat. 11. 25.* and many other places well known.

3. *Because we have all need of this from one another.* We are all men
subject

subject to like passions; nay, usually those that need it most from others, use it least; such as are passionate and boisterous, and though good men, yet as a wise man said of one of such a rugged temper, *Though he had Grace enough for seven others, yet had little enough for himself.* But yet if there be any so equal tempered by Nature, so polished by Education, so ruled by Grace in all things, and towards all, that he hath no need of moderation from others, let him take the first stone, and violently throw at his Neighbour. Read, I pray, *Matth. 18.* from v. 21. to the end, which is the great Scripture for our Moderation to one another, and is most ample therein, where you will see both the equity and necessity thereof to Salvation.

For the last particular, which is the Use and Application of this Moderation towards one another.

1. *Use of Information.* That it is not enough that we have Moderation, (which all pretend to, though few practise) but we must shew it; nay, not only shew it sparingly, or at some times, and to some, but usually, frequently, constantly, and to all men.

Use.

Use 2. Therefore of Exhortation. Wherein let me plead with you a little, for Moderation towards one another, this so much awanting, and yet so necessary Duty, besides the equitableness thereof in the *Reasons*, consider briefly the necessity, utility, and jucundity thereof.

1. *How necessary?* Are there not *disadvantages*, or difficulties? Have all the like apprehensions? Is not the ballance of Reason very deceitful? Are any of us infallible? Nay, doth not the pretence thereto declare the contrary?

2. *How profitable is this to us all?* Moderation doth not a little conduce to the health of our bodies, as the great *Hippocrates* and Experience tells us; nothing more destroying us, than not onely immoderateness in things, but our passions against others; and not less to the peace and tranquillity of our minds, for the enjoyment of our selves; and most to the serving and enjoying of God. If good *Jonah* be in a passion, he is not only weary of his life, but his praying is nothing but quarrelling with God, *Jonah 4.* Nay, it hath an especial promise both from God and Christ; *The meek shall inherit the earth*, *Psal. 36. 11.* whom our Saviour therefore pronounceth *blessed*, *Matth. 5. 5.* Who-soever therefore may curse them, or count them fools for the same, he having blessed them, blessed they shall be.

3. *How sweet and pleasant a thing is Moderation, both to our selves and others?* It being the foundation of that sweet Fellowship and Communion of Saints, which is one great Article of our Creed.

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Experience

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Experience tells every one how sweet the Fruit of Moderation is, so that Felicity and it (as the Heathen said) constantly dwell together, in Families, in Nations, all the World over. Without it, this World would be a Desert, barren of all comfort, and nothing but a vast howling Wilderness for Bears and Wolves, not civil Men or Christians to dwell in. Let therefore the necessity of Moderation persuade thee, let its profit and pleasure draw and allure thee to the practice thereof.

Lastly, To these Motives, let me add that of the Text, *The Lord is at hand*. For so I look upon this, and all other Arguments subjoyned to Exhortations and Commands; for though they be materially Reasons to convince, yet are formally Motives to persuade and quicken us to the Duties enjoyned. Flesh and blood may say, others are insolent, and the more we are ready to bear, the more they are apt to injure us; as the Heathens to the Christians of old cryed, *Blessed are the poor*, and so plundered them: Therefore *Uluandum inter lupos*, we must retaliate like for like. Oh no, saith the Apostle, *ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς*, the Lord is nigh to observe them, and how they carry in his Family; whose wisdom governs their petulancy, and whose power and goodness can overcome all their malice and unkindness; is nigh to observe thee, and to help thee in his due time, if injured; and is nigh also to judge both, to punish those that miscarry, *Matth. 18. 34, 35.* and reward those that herein are his Children. The not believing this, *that the Lord is at hand*, in his Providence, and with his Judgement, is the great reason of the want of Moderation in the World. Let us therefore all live under a continual fence of this, and all pray for, and practise moderation. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing, (1 Pet. 3. 8, 9.) and that the Lord is at hand, ready to bestow it upon all those that make their moderation known unto all men.

How



How may we have futable Conceptions of God in duty ?

Gen. 18. 27.

And Abraham answered and said, Behold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but Dust and Ashes.



His Text presents to us, *Abraham's* standing before the Lord, pleading for the preservation of the Righteous, in the destruction of *Sodom*, and for the preservation of *Sodom* (if possible) from destruction, for the Righteous sake.

That which we have in it, more especially to take notice of in reference to this present Exercise, is with what apprehensions or conceptions of God, *Abraham* did speak to God, did deport himself towards God, did manage this great undertaking with God. Concerning which, four things present themselves for our Observation ;

1. That those Apprehensions or Conceptions *Abraham* had of God, did highly exalt and magnifie the greatness and excellency of God in his heart ; — *Behold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord* ; One who hath Excellency, and Sovereignty, and Majesty, and Dominion, and Power, and Glory.

2. That they were such Conceptions of God, as did humble, vilifie, and abase *Abraham* in himself in comparifon of God ; — *I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but Dust and Ashes* ; a sinful, weak, worthless, frail piece of vanity and mortality.

3. That they were such Conceptions of God, as did represent him Gracious, Propitious, Benevolous to the Creature, notwithstanding the

the greatness and excellency of God, and the meanness and unworthiness of the Creature: Thus much seems to be comprehended in the Note of Admiration, *Behold!* — O what admirable condescension is this in the Great God! O what wonderful Mercy and Grace is this, that such a poor vile Creature should have liberty to speak to him, to parley with him!

4. That they were such apprehensions of God, as did beget in *Abraham* a Faith of Acceptation with God in the performance of that duty, without which it had been dangerous presumption in him, *who was but dust and ashes, to take upon him to speak unto the Lord.*

This Example of *Abraham* I shall endeavour to draw forth for our Practice and Imitation; He who is made to us a Pattern of Faith, may be to us a Pattern of true Worship; and such apprehensions or conceptions *Abraham* had of God in speaking to him, such conceptions of God we are to have in our Prayers and performances to him.

For which end I shall lay down this general Proposition.

Doct.

That such as speak to God, or speak of God; such as draw near to God, or have to do with God in any part of Divine Worship, must manage all their performances, with apprehensions and due conceptions of God.

The truth of this General Proposition, I shall endeavour to manifest and make clear, by laying down four particular Propositions, which must give evidence to it.

The first Proposition is this, That we cannot have any true, right apprehensions, or conceptions of God, except we have a true knowledge of him; Such as have not known God, have slighted him; *Who is the Lord, saith Pharaoh, that I should obey him? I know not the Lord, Exod. 5. 2.* Such as know not God, nor desire to know him, are so far from drawing near to God, that they drive him as far from them as they can; they say unto the Almighty, *Depart from us, who desire not the knowledge of his wayes, Job 21. 14.*

What counsel *Eliphaz* gave *Job*, (whom he supposed to be a greater stranger to God than indeed he was) may be an useful instruction to us, *Job 22. 21. Acquaint thy self with God.* — To know God, and to be known of God, is our highest privilege; *Acquaint thy self with God, and be at peace.* The reason why any are real enemies to God, is, because they know not God; and the reason why many think God is an enemy to them, is, because they are not acquainted with God so intimately as they should; *Acquaint thy self with God* (saith he) — and thereby good shall come unto thee: But what good? And how shall this good come? It is partly exprest, *v. 22, 23, 24, 25.* but more fully,

v. 26,

v. 26, 27. *For then shalt thou have thy delight in thy Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face to God; Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows;* So that except we know God aright, and have some acquaintance with him, we cannot delight our selves in God, we cannot make our prayer to him, nor lift up our face unto him.

The second Proposition is, That we cannot know any thing, savingly of God, further than he is pleased to manifest and make known himself to us; No man can make known God, but God himself: *Moses*, who had seen as much of God's glory as any man, when he desired a further manifestation of God's glory, in a higher measure or degree than formerly he had seen, he goes to God himself for it, *Exod. 33. 18. Beseech thee shew me thy glory.*

The great Promise Christ maketh to them that love him and keep his Commandments, is the manifestation of himself to them by Himself, *Joh. 14. 21. — I will manifest my self to them, for none else can:* A Disciple puts a Question to him about it, v. 22. *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to us, and not to the World?* We have a clear answer to this, *Luk. 10. 21.* This very Doctrine which is so much matter of indignation to the wise and prudent of the World, is matter of rejoycing and exaltation to the Spirit of Christ; and he said, *I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid — and thou hast revealed — For so it seemed good in thy sight:* Hence is that of our Saviour, *Joh. 17. 25. O righteous Father, the World hath not known thee, but these have known —*

The third Proposition is, That the clearest manifestations of God to us, and such as can beget in us right apprehensions and due conceptions of him, are made out to us, In and By Jesus Christ. *Joh. 1. 18. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him;* Therefore no man ever did, or can apprehend any thing of God truly, that is, upon a saving account, but in and by Jesus Christ.

The Divine Essence or Godhead, *No man hath seen, or can see in itself,* *1 Tim. 6. 16.*

Something of this Eternal God-head, is manifested in the Works of Creation, *Rom. 1. 20. The invisible things of God, viz. his Eternal Power and God-head, are clearly seen in the things that are made;* But yet this knowledge of God in the Creature, could not bear down the vain imaginations, or idolatrous conception of God in mens hearts, as appears *vers. 21, 23.*

Much of the Eternal God-head, is manifested in the Works of Providence;

vidence ; God doth great things past finding out, and wonders without number ; Yet so, he goeth by us, and we see him not ; he passeth on also, but we perceive him not, Job 9. 10, 11. God is invisible in himself, and incomprehensible in his works ; Job made it his work to trace God in his works, Job 23. 8, 9. Sometimes God was working forward, or before him ; sometimes backward, or behind him ; sometimes on his right hand, sometimes at his left hand. Job follows him up and down if he might apprehend him, and the reason and design of God in all his works, but he could not perceive him, God hid himself from him.

Much more of the Eternal God-head was manifested in his most Righteous and Holy Law ; but the manifestations of God here a-frighted them that saw it ; the People cry out, *Let not the Lord speak any more to us, lest we die* ; and Moses himself said, *I exceedingly fear* ; so terrible was the sight of God there, Heb. 12. 21.

Hence it will follow, that the clearest, sweetest, most comfortable manifestations of God to us, and such as can beget in us right apprehensions and conceptions of God, are made out to us onely in Jesus Christ, who is the Image of the Invisible God, Colos. 1. 15. In whom God hath made such discoveries of himself, as can no where be seen but in Christ ; He is the express Image or Character of his Fathers Person, Heb. 1. 3. The exact resemblance of all his Fathers excellencies in their utmost perfections ; therefore when Philip desired him to shew them of the Father, to give them a sight to satisfaction, John 14. 9, 10. *He that hath seen me*, (saith Christ to him) *hath seen the Father* ; Believe it Philip, *I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.*

In the Works of Creation, God is a God above us ; In his Works of Providence, a God without us ; In the Law, a God against us ; In himself, a God invisible to us ; Onely in Christ he is *Emmanuel*, God manifested in our flesh, God in us, God with us, God for us.

Hence follows the fourth Proposition, That the manifestations of God to us in Christ, are those which alone can beget those due apprehensions, and right Conceptions of God, with which we must draw near to him, and perform all our worship to him.

As *Abraham* is held forth to us a Pattern of Faith ; so he may be to us a Pattern of Worship, in as much as all true Worship to God is performed by Faith, by Faith in Christ : Such apprehensions therefore *Abraham* had of God in his Worship, such apprehensions of God we are to have in our Worship ; and as *Abraham* had those conceptions of God by Faith in Christ, so can we have the like conceptions of God by Faith in Christ onely.

1. Those

1. Those apprehensions Abraham had of God did beget (as we have shewn) high thoughts of God, with such apprehensions of God we must perform all our worship; see what high thoughts of God his people have always had in worshipping him, *Neb. 9. 5, 6. 1 Tim. 1. 17. 1 Tim. 6. 16.*

Low thoughts of God will ever perform but low, base, contemptible Service and Worship; they brought God the blind, the lame, the sick for Sacrifice, *Mal. 1. Go, saith God, present them to your Governour, and see if he do not scorn your present, as undervalued by it? Ver. 8. And shall I accept this at your hands which a petty Lord will reject with indignation? Ver. 13. For I am a great King, saith the Lord of Hosts, Ver. 14.*

Now such high thoughts and conceptions of God with which all our Worship must be performed to him, can spring only from the manifestations of God in Christ, who is the highest Revelation of the Glory of God, *1sa. 40. 5.* The brightness, the effulgency of his glory, *Heb. 1. 3.* When God had yielded to give Moses a sight of his glory, he put him into the Cleft of the Rock (which was a "resemblance of Christ, as a Learned Divine hath observed) and so made his glory to pass before him, *Exod. 33. 22.* Certainly, Moses had here a sight of Gods glory beyond all that ever he had seen before. Compare with this that Text, *2 Cor. 4. 6. God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ:* All the other manifestations of Gods glory were but dark and dim, in comparison of those which appear in the face of Jesus Christ. Therefore we can attain no where such high, so great, so glorious Conceptions of God as in Jesus Christ.

2. Abraham had such Conceptions of God as humbled, emptied, and abased him in himself in comparison of God; and with such apprehensions of God must we perform all our Worship to him, *Psal. 95. 6* We are exhorted to come and worship, and bow down, and kneel — In all worship we are to testify, as our absolute subjection to God, to our humblest submission to him; Observe what self-abasing thoughts the apprehensions of Gods goodness wrought in David when he went to worship before the Lord, *2 Sam. 7. 18, 19, 20.*

Now such Conceptions of God, which above all others humble, and lessen, and abase the Creature before God, they spring principally from the manifestation of God in Christ.

It is the general opinion of the Schoolmen, that the Angels in the first instant of their Creation did not enjoy that sight of God we call

G g g

Beatific

* Dr. Reynolds.
Pl. 110. p. 166.

See Balfield
de Ang. c. 34.
& 35. Aquin.
part. 1. quest.
61. Art. 1.

Beatificall vision, and that the Angels that fell never had sight of it at all, for if they had, they could not have fallen. But what they talk of the good Angels meriting that Beatificall Vision of God in the second or third instant of their Creation, is Popish soppery. Divines unanimously attribute their station and stability in holiness to Jesus Christ. We may upon good grounds also attribute to Jesus Christ their first admission into the presence, sight, enjoyment of God, their state of supernatural blessedness. Pardon this digression, it is to make the way clear of the demonstration in hand, viz. That the Angels before they had a sight of God, or of themselves in Christ, many of them waxed proud and fell; the same pride that ruined some might have ruined all; but after they had a sight of God in Christ, how humble were they? that Vision spoken of, *Isa. 6. 1, 2.* was manifestly an appearance of the glory of God in Jesus Christ, *I saw the Lord upon his Throne, high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple;* what the carriage of the Seraphims was towards God in this his appearance is exprest, *Each one had six wings, with twain they did fly;* noting their ready execution of Gods Commands: *with twain they did cover their faces;* noting their natural impotency in themselves to behold the surpassing brightness of Divine Glory: *with twain they covered their feet* as humbled in the sense and shame of their own Creature Imperfection in comparison of the infinite purity and holiness of God.

Thus, when *Moses* had had a sight of the glory of God in Christ, *He made haste, he bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped.* *Exod. 34. 8.* Quickly is the soul humbled at the manifestations of God in Christ. In Christ we have seen God humbling, emptying, lessening, dishonouring himself for us, *Phil. 2. 3, 6, 7.* Who can be proud that hath had a true sight of God humbled for him?

By the manifestations of God in Christ are begotten the deepest soul humiliations for sin, *Zach. 12. 10.* *They shall look on Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him* and they shall be in bitterness for him. This great sorrow was not for the piercing of the Humanity of Christ barely considered, but for piercing God in Christ, though the Godhead was not in the least passive, therefore that blood which was shed is called, *The blood of God, Act. 20. 28.* and that person who was pierced called, *The Lord of Glory, 1 Cor. 2. 8.* Sins against the manifestations of the Love, Mercy, Grace, Compassion, Goodness, and Glory of God in Christ beget the deepest humiliation of soul in all our Confessions.

3. *Abraham* had such Conceptions of God as did represent him gracious

gracious, propitious, benevolous to the Creature, a bountifull rewarder of him that serveth him, notwithstanding the greatness of God, or the unworthiness of the Creature.

Such apprehensions we must have of God in all our approaches to him, in all our performances of duty and worship.

When *Cain* could not apprehend so much favour and grace of God as could pardon his sin and remove his punishment, he then went out from the presence of the Lord! *Gen. 4. 13. 16.* That is (as Interpreters of good note render it) he left the Church of God in his Fathers Family, the Worship of God, the Ordinances of God, the service of God, the profession of God and all: Such as cannot have apprehensions of God as gracious, propitious, will not come into the presence of God.

Nor such as cannot apprehend him a bountifull rewarder of them that come to him? They bid God depart from them who question whether God can do any thing for them, or whether there be any profit in his service, *Job 21. 14, 15.* and *Job. 22. 17.* when those mercenary hypocrites had lost their worldly profits and preferments which they had gained by the profession of Religion, when the tide was turned, and prophanness only countenanced, they cast of all, and said, *It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances,* *Mal. 3. 14, 15.*

But he that cometh to God must have such apprehensions of him as render him Gracious as well as Glorious, Merciful as well as Righteous; for we come to God sitting on his Throne of Grace, *Heb. 4. ult.* and we have to deal with mercy for supply to all our needs.

And he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, *Heb. 11. 6.* Why did *David* prefer the lowest place or office in the House or Church of God (a Porters place) before the highest preferments in the Tents of ungodliness, *Psal. 84. 10.* He gives the reason, *Ver. 11 For the Lord is a Sun and shield;* A Sun to confer all good, a shield to preserve from all evil; He will give Grace and Glory, what can a man desire more? yet if there be any good thing beside Grace and Glory, he will not withhold it; such a bountifull Master is God in his House, and such a one his Servants apprehend him.

Now, we cannot have right apprehensions and due conceptions of the Grace, Mercy, Good will of God to us, but from the manifestations of God in Jesus Christ; It is God in Christ reconciling the World to himself, and beseeching us to be reconciled to him, *2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.* When God gave *Moses* a sight of his glory in the Clift of the Rock, *I*

will, saith God, *make all my goodness pass before thee*, and be proclaimed the name of the Lord, *Exod. 34. 6, 7. The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful, Gracious, Long suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin*; He presents himself in his richest robes of State, and all his Attributes arrayed in a Livery of Grace.

Nor can we have right apprehensions of God as a bountiful rewarder of his Servants, but through the manifestations of himself to us in Christ; for we cannot expect the reward of Debt, but of Grace; God in Christ, and upon the account of Christ is the most bountiful Rewarder; So Christ tells his Disciples, *Joh. 12. 26, If any man serves me, let him follow me, and where I am there shall my servant be also: If any man serve me, him shall my Father honour*; We serve the Father in serving the Son; never was service rewarded with such honour; For (saith Christ) *The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I am sent of God*, *Joh. 16. 27.*

4. Abraham had such apprehensions of God as did beget a comfortable perswasion of faith for his acceptance with God in that his drawing near to him.

It is the mind of God that such as come to him should have such apprehensions of him as one that will accept them, embrace them, when he discovers nothing but wrath and displeasure against them that stand in opposition against him, *Isa. 27. 4, 5. Fury is not in me: Let a man take hold of my strength that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me*: That holy man knew that all his happiness consisted in the enjoyment of God, therefore he said, *It is good for me to draw near to God*; but was he sure God would accept him? *I have put my trust* (saith he) *in the Lord God*, *Psal. 73. 27, 28.*

Now such apprehensions of God as beget a faith of acceptance with God in our approaches to him, can spring only from the manifestations of God to us in Christ; that is supposed (by judicious Interpreters) to be spoken of Jesus Christ, *Jer. 30. 21. who is said to engage his heart to approach unto the Lord*; and God saith, *I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me*; Christ hath boldness and liberty, full security of acceptance with God; and hereby he hath procured us liberty, boldness, and acceptance with God; *Heb. 4. 14. 16. Seeing we have a great high Priest passed into the Heavens — Let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace*, *Heb. 10. 19, 21, 22. Having boldness to enter into the Holiest — And having an high Priest over the House of God; Let us draw nigh to God with truth of heart, and full assurance of faith*, *ver. 2. For the*

the acceptance of our persons and services. Eph. 3. 12. *In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*

From what hath been laid down we may conclude, That such apprehensions or Conceptions of God wherewith we are to draw near to God, to perform every duty, and every part of Divine Worship must flow from the manifestations of God in Jesus Christ.

The Use I shall make of this Point is to inform Christians how much it concerneth us to acquaint our selves more intimately with God as he hath manifested himself in Jesus Christ: In whom alone we can have right apprehensions and due Conceptions of God; without which we cannot perform aright any kind of Worship to God. Use.

1. Without due apprehensions and conceptions of God we cannot perform any part of that Natural Worship we owe to God, we cannot love him, fear him, trust in him, pray unto him, praise him, &c.

2. Without the right apprehensions and due conceptions of God in Jesus Christ we cannot perform aright any part of his Instituted Worship.

1. For all the Ordinances of Gods Instituted Worship (as the Sacrifices and Sacraments under the Law, so the Sacraments and other Ordinances under the Gospel.) seem to have immediate relation to, and near dependance on Christ, *God manifested in the flesh.* You may observe, they consist of two parts, the one Natural, the other Spiritual; the one External, the other Internal: The one as it were, the Body, the other, the Soul of it; The one representing the Humanity, the other the Divinity of Jesus Christ: So that every Ordinance of Worship is (as it were) a representation of Christ Incarnate.

2. The Divine Essence or Godhead in Jesus Christ seems to be the proper object of all Worship.

The School-men have concluded (to which I find our learned and pious Divines have given their assent) *That the Essence of the Godhead is the primary and proper object of Worship.* Dr. Owens Commun. with the holy Ghost, Chap. 8.

This Divine Essence is wholly in Christ, Col. 2. 9. *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily:* In that body or Humane Nature of Christ the fulness of the Godhead dwelt not locally, (as *Locatum in loco*, or *contentum in continente*) but by personal Union. And the Divine Essence as it is in Christ, seems to be the proper Object of all Gospel-Worship: It was so under the Law in Types and Figures; and such was the Tabernacle and temple Worship in its spiritual Notion.

The Tabernacle or Temple was Gods Habitation, or dwelling place, *Psal. 76. 2. There was the only place of publick Worship, Psal. 29. 2.*

No

No Sacrifice was to be offered in any other place: There the Spiritual Worshippers had by faith a sight of God, and communion with God, *Psal.* 63. 2. *Psal.* 68. 24. Towards God in this place they were to make all their Supplications and Prayers where ever, or in what Country soever they were, *1 Kin.* 8. 29. 30. See *Dan.* 6. 10. Now the Tabernacle and Temple were a Type of the Body or Humanity of Christ, as himself explaineth, *Joh.* 2. 19. in which the Divine glory of the Godhead dwelt; *Joh.* 1. 14. *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us* (or Tabernacled in us, as the Greek word signifies) *and we saw his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* Therefore what the Tabernacle or Temple was to them under the Law, that is Christ Jesus to us under the Gospel. And as God manifested to them in the Temple was the proper Object of Worship to them, so God manifested to us in Christ is the proper Object of Worship to us.

3. The Flesh or Humanity of Christ is the *Medium* or Mean by which we have access to God in all our Worship. This is expressed, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20: *Having boldness to enter into the Holiest* (where the Divine glory appeared between the Cherubims on the Mercy seat) *by the blood of Jesus. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the Vail, which is to say, his Flesh.* By the flesh of Christ here I do not understand his Natural Flesh barely considered as such, but in that notion as it is to be understood, *Joh.* 3. 53, 54, 55, 56. where Christ speaking of eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood unto life; where Christ's Flesh (by a Metonymy of the Cause for the Effect) signifies the Righteousness, Satisfaction, Reconciliation, Grace, Peace, Glory, Christ procured for us by the obedience he performed to God in that Flesh; By the Flesh of Christ in this sense we have access to God in all our Worship.

Yet is not the consideration of Christ's Natural Flesh altogether useless unto this end; For whereas we are apt to frame Images and Similitudes of God in our minds, the right apprehension of God dwelling in the Humane Nature of Christ (who is the true Image of the invisible God) may be effectual to remove all other Images and likenesses of God out of our minds: But then we must be careful that we do not terminate our conceptions of God in the Man Christ, or in the Manhood of Christ, for then we shall make the Humane Nature of Christ the Image of the Godhead, and that would be an Idol. But when we have taken up an apprehension of the Humanity of Christ, if our conceptions pass through the vail into the Holiest, if we are led thereby to worship that Godhead that dwelt in it, this is a right Conception and true Worship.

The

The Humanity of Christ was to the Godhead as a back of metal to a Chrystal Glass; Look on such a glass in its pure substance and it is transparent, put a back of metal to it and it gives a beautiful reflex: So if we take up Conceptions of the Godhead in its pure Essence, it is transparent: If we consider God infinite, Almighty, immense, Eternal, what is this to the Creature, or our comfort? If we consider him in his Power, Justice, Wisdom, Holiness, Goodness, Truth, what is this to us: Yea, all these are against us as we are sinners; But if we take up Conceptions of God in all these Attributes as they appear to us in Christ, as they are back with the Humanity of Christ, so they make a most comfortable reflex upon us; In this glass we behold the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same similitude from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3. 18. In this Glass we behold that Wisdom by which we are instructed, that righteousness by which we are justified, that power by which we are preserved, that grace by which we are chosen and called, that goodness by which we are relieved and supplied, that holiness by which we are transformed, that glory to which we shall be conformed.

The Conclusion of all this is, *That our right apprehensions and due Conceptions of God must spring from the manifestations of God in Jesus Christ.*

How

How are we To live by Faith on Divine Providence?

Pfal. 62. 8.

Trust in Him, at all times, ye People.



These Words are a serious and Pathetick exhortation to a most Important and Spiritual duty. In them we observe.

I. The Duty proposed and enjoyed, i. e. *Trust*. Trust in Him. Confide in, or securely repose your selves upon him, for Assistance, support, direction, protection, provision, Deliverance, Compleat Salvation.

II. The subjects of this Trust, Or the persons on whom. this Duty is incumbent, and from whom it is expected. i. e. *ye people*. Wherein we note,

1. The *Echphrasis*, that lies couchant in the words, which is apt to excite Intention, and Affection, q. d. *O ye People*. So the *Arabick* Translator renders the word, *O Populi*.

2. The universality of its Concernment, To all People: 'Tis an indefinite expression, and holds parallel with an Universal: *ye b People*, q. d. *O All ye People*, of what Sex, age, degree, condition, relation soever. Thus the *Septuagint* render the word, *πᾶσι οὐρανῶν λαῖ*, and the *Vulgar* follows them: sc. *Omnis Congregatio populi*.

3. The speciality of its obligation, on some People, more than others. 'Tis True, All the families of the Earth must Trust in God; But there is a *special* Tye that lies on the Household of Faith, the Commonwealth of Israel, the Assemblies of the Saints; those that are the dearly beloved of Gods Soul. These are strongly obliged, beyond, and above all others, To Trust in the Lord Their God. Thus the

Chaldees

as A TIBJ
confisum est.
Fiduciam po-
sult.

lady
Singular cele-
stium pro-
pheta's, per syn-
thesin Hebraicis
supracliffiman,
dilect.

Chaldee Paraph. Popule, Domus Israel, and the Psalmist elsewhere, Psal. 115. 9. 11. O Israel, trust in the Lord, ye that fear the Lord, whether Jew or Gentile, trust in the Lord.

3. The grand object of this holy trust, or the person in whom this trust must be reposed: viz. in him. i. e. the Lord Jehovah: as appears from vers. 7. In c him, and in him a'one, 'Tis an exclusive Particle. In him, and in nothing besides him.

c Ei. i. e. Ei
soli Jun. Tæ:
mel.

4. The Modification of this trust, or the Circumstance of the time when, and the Duration How long, this Trust is to be exerted.

1. Quando: When must we Trust? At what time?

Sol. At all times, Omni Horâ Every Hour: So the Syr. version. As a true friend is to love, so a sound Believer is to Trust at all d Prov. 17. 17 times.

2. Quamdiu: The Duration of this Trust, How long?

Sol. All the day long, Pl. 44. 8. All our lives long: All the days of their appointed time must Gods Job's not only wait, but trust till their change come. Yea, for ev. r. Isa. 26. 4. nay, for ever and ever. Psal. 52. 8.

Having thus unlockt the Cabinet; The Jewel, or Truth, that we find laid up in it is this, viz.

It is the great indispensable Duty of all Believers, at all times to trust Observations in the Lord, and in him alone.

All that I have to say on this practical Truth, I shall Conch under these six Generals.

1. On That trusting in God, is a Believers Duty.

2. What it is to trust in God?

3. What is, and ought to be, the grand and sole object of a believers trust?

4. What are those sure and stable Grounds, Those Corner-stones on which the Faithful may firmly Build their trust in God?

5. What are those special and signal seasons, which call aloud for the exerting of this trust?

6. How Faith or Trust puts forth, exerts, demeanes, bestirs it self in such seasons?

1. On, That Trusting in God is a Believers Duty. The Lord is, or at least he should be the c Confidence of all the ends of the Earth, Psal. 65. 5. Trust in the Lord with all thy Heart, Prov. 3. 5. On the Arm of his Power, Isa. 51. 5. 5. On the f word of his Truth, in his faithful promises, in his freest mercies, Psal. 52. 8. In his full Salvation, Psal. 78. 22.

c Meton. Ad-
justi. Adus
pro Objecto.
i In verbis
ejus. So Chald.
Paraph. renders
our Text.

2. What it is to trust in God.

H h h

I. Nigæ

Sol,

1. *Negatively*, To presume on God, to tempt God, to conceive false hopes of Gods gracious favour and protection, whilst in a way of sin, is not to trust in God. To gallop down a precipice, and to say confidently I shall not fall; to cast our selves down headlong from a Pinnacle of the Temple, and yet to expect the protection of Angels: Nat. 4. 6. 7.

g Mic. 3. 11.

To Teach for Hire, and to Divine for Money, and yet to glean upon the Lord, saying, Is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us: To bless a mans self in his heart, and to say he shall have peace, though he walk in the imaginations of his evil heart; Dent. 29. 19. All this is not

i Job 15. 31.

to Trust in God, but to trust in i Vanity, and to spin the Spiders web: Job 8. 13, 14.

2. *Positively*, And so more generally, and more particularly.

k Psal. 55. 22.

1. *More Generally*, to trust in God, is to cast k our burthen on the Lord when 'tis too heavy for our own shoulder: To dwell in the se-

l Psal. 91. 1.

cret l places of the Most High, when we know not where to lay our

n Isa. 36. 6.

Heads on earth. To look to our Maker, and to have respect to the Holy One of Israel, Isa. 17. 7. To n lean on our Beloved, Cant 8. 5. To stay our selves when sinking, on the Lord our God, Isa. 26. 3. In a word: Trust in God, is that High Act or Exercise of Faith, whereby the Soul looking upon God and casting of it's self on His goodness, power, promises, faithfulness, and providence is lifted up above carnal fears, and discouragements, above perplexing doubts and disquietments, either for the obtaining and continuance of that which is good, or for the preventing or removing of that which is evil.

2. *More particularly*: For the clearer discovery of the Nature of Divine trust, we shall lay before you, It's Ingredients, Concomitants, Effects.

I. The ingredients of trust in God. They are three,

a Psal. 9. 10.

1. A clear knowledge, or Right apprehension of God, as revealed in His Word, and Works. They and they only that a know thy Name, will trust in thee. The grand Reason, why God is so little trusted, is because He is so little known. Knowledge of God is of such necessity to a Right trust, that it is put as a Synonyma for trust. I will set him on p Psal. 57. 14. high, because he hath p known (i.e. Trusted in) my name.

p Psal. 57. 14.

2. A full Assent of the understanding, and Consent of the will, to Those Divine Revelations, as true and good, wherein the Lord proposeth himself as an Adequate Object for our trust. This Act the Greeks express by the word ΠΙΣΤΙΣ. The Latines by Credere, Fidem habere. Testimonium recipere: The Hebrews by יָאֵמֵן. All importing believing or giving

q Exod. 14. 31.

q credit to. Thus the Israelites are said to q believe the Lord and his Servant;

Servant Moses: And thus the Soul that trusts, looks upon the words of Promise; *ὡς πιστὰ ἔστιν ἡ ἐπαγγελία* & *ἀξία*: as faithful and worthy of all acceptation. 1 Tim. 1. 25

3. A firm and fixed reliance, Resting, or Recumbency of the whole Soul on God; or a firm persuasion, and special Confidence of the Heart, whereby a believer particularly applies to himself the faithful promises, of God, and certainly Concludes and determines with himself, that the Lord is able and willing to make good to him the good promises he hath made. This indeed is the very formality of trust; one of the Highest and Noblest Acts of Faith. This is that which the Greeks term *Πιστὴς*, and which Paul so frequently useth in several of his Epistles. Thus Abraham is said, to be strong in Faith, giving glory to God; and was fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able and willing to perform. This the Latines call *Fiducia*; The Schools *Fiducia fidei*, the Hebrews by a word that signifies to lean on, or cast the weight of ones body on, for support and stay. Thus, Isa. 10. 20. The house of Jacob shall no more stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the Lord the Holy One of Israel in truth. Thus *נשעו* from *miser innorari*, *incurber.*

2. The Concomitants of an Holy trust, and these are,

1. An Holy quietness, security, and peaceableness of Spirit springing from a full persuasion of our safety. By this the Soul is freed from distracting cares and jealousies, about our state & condition. Hence that of the Prophet Isa. 26. 3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is staid on thee, because he trusteth in thee. An holy security I say, not a carnal security, like theirs mentioned, Zeph. 1. 12. that were settled on their lees, that said in their hearts, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil: nor like that of the scarlet whore, Rev. 18. 6. that says in heart, I sit as a Queen, & shall see no sorrow. No but an holy security as we have it, Prov. 18. 10. The Name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth to it, i. e. by the feet of trust, and is safe: As safe as a man judgeth himself to be, when got into an high tower well fortified, and fears not the sharpest or swiftest darts, that can be shot against him. Safe as the chickens take themselves to be, when housed under the x Covert of their Dam's wing, Psal. 46. 1. Or safe as the manslayer is from the pursuit of the Avenger, when Lodg'd in a City of Refuge. Thus when a man trusts in God, he doth sweetly acquiesce and repose himself in Gods bosome, troubles himself no more, casts no jealous thoughts about his Condition. Thus David resolves, I will lay me down in peace, and sleep, for thou, Lord, makest me to dwell in y safety or in trust, Psal. 4. 8.

שלום
pacem
שלום
pacem

ושנן
Et exaltabitur.
Gelus ab alto,
infra se cernens
Hominum ge-
nus. Sil. Ital.
x ut pulis
sub alis galli-
na.

לנשעו
Confidentia.

2. *A Stedfast, well-grounded Hope*, Trust and Hope are Gemini, Twins, born together, bred up together; hence often conjoyn'd in Scripture. *Thou art my Hope* 2 O Lord God, *thou art my Trust* from my youth: *And blessed is the man, that a trusteth in the Lord, and whose Hope the Lord is.* Hence the Septuagint usually render the word put for Trust, as also in the Text *אמונתו* *Amounu*, and *Ar. Mons.* and divers others, *Sperate*. Hope ye in the Lord; Hope then is that *Fidus Achates*, the Faithful Companion of Trust. Now, in this Hope there are two things,

1. *An holy and confident expectation, and looking after Gods gracious presence.* Trust believes, and Hope expects to enjoy what God has promised. Thus the Prophet, *Isa. 8. 17. I will wait upon the Lord, and I will b look for him.* Hope looks, and looks out, as expecting Gods appearing; Not as *Sisera's* mother once did, who looked for a victorious success, and expected that her son should have returned a triumphant Conqueror, richly laden with spoils and booty, when as the wretch lay c bleeding at the foot of *Zael*: Nor like those sinful miserable people, who d looked for peace, but behold, no good came. No, such a vain groundless Hope, draws a blush into the cheek, and covers the face with confusion. But this is an Hope which makes not e ashamed: whose earnest expectation shall assuredly end in sweet fruition.

2. *An humble and constant waiting on Gods Leisure.* Looking out, and waiting on God, both put together. *I therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my Salvation; my God will bear me.* Faith gets up to the top of it's watch tower, looks out, sees whether relief be coming. But suppose none appears in *Kenne*. Suppose help deser'd. Yet now it waits, and carries Gods time: Faith knocks at Heavens Gate, no answer from within; Faith knocks again, still there is silence, However Faith concludes, my God will bear, yea, and answer too; but 'tis fit I should wait his time. *g The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie: Though it tarry, I must and will wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* Thus David, *My h Soul wait thou only upon God, or keep thou silence unto God, for my expectation is from him.* David, when he shuts his mouth, opens his ear; waits and listens what God will say, and concludes, *Contra Gentes*, the Lord will in his own best time speak peace, *Psal 85. 8.*

3. *An humble, holy, and undaunted Confidence.* Thus Solomon, in the fear of the Lord, in the filial, awful, reverential fear of God, here is strong c Confidence, and his children shall have a place of refuge, *Prov. 14. 26.* This holy confidence is nothing else, but Faith peg'd up to it's *Esa.* A confident Soul moves in an higher Orb than other Saints, leads up

z *Psal. 71. 5.*
a *Jer. 17. 7.*
Psal. 119 42,
43, 49.

וְקִוִּיתִי
Et expectabo
eum.

c *Judg. 5. 28.*
d *Jer. 7. 15.*

e *Rom. 5. 5.*

f *Mic. 7. 7.*

g *Hab. 2. 3.*

h *Psal. 62. 5.*

c *וְקִוִּיתִי*
fidelis fortis
disia.

up the *Van* of the *Militia* of Heaven. As *Patience* is nothing else but *Hope Lengthened*: so *Confidence* is nothing less than *Faith strengthened*, the very *Spirits*, the meet *Elixir* of Faith, which carries with it.

1. *Christian Courage* and *Fortitude*, opposite to *Carnal fear* and despondency of Spirit. *d* Behold, God is my Salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord *Jehovah* is my strength. *e* He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, his Heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. Thus *David* undauntedly, the Lord is my Light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? *Psal.* 27. 1. His Confidence in God quite extinguishes in him all base, sneaking fear of man, *Psal.* 56. 4.

2. *Christian boldness* and *Adventurousness*, opposite to *Cowardice*. Holy Confidence steels the heart of *f Joseph* of *Aramathea* to go in Boldly to *Pilate*, and to beg the Body of *Jesus*. This was that enabled *David* to encounter *Goliath*, that made him dare to take a Bear by the teeth, yea, and a Lion by the Beard: 'Tis for sluggards to say, there's a Lion in the way, *Prov.* 22. 13. but let a Believer that makes God his Trust, but once Know his Duty, it is enough, he will with a *Courageous* and undaunted mind, cheerfully undertake it, and commit both himself and the success to God, *Acts* 4. 13, 19. — 20. 22. — 21. 13, *Jer.* 7. 7, 8, 9. *Dan.* 3. 17, 18, *Esther* 4. 16. *Heb.* 10. 34. to 40.

3. *Holy and humble Boasting*, opposite to sinful Concealing of what God hath done for us. A Believer that dares not Boast of himself, or riches, of any thing within, that has no Confidence in the flesh, yet dares boast of his God. In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy Name for ever. Thus the Church, challenges the eyes and ears, of All that were round about her, saying, Lo, this, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he hath saved us, *Isa.* 25. 9.

III. The Effects of an holy Trust, and they are such as these;

1. *Fervent, effectual, constant Prayer*, Thus in our text, Trust, in him at all times, ye people, pour out your hearts before him, *pl.* 62. 8. while *Josuah* is in the Valley conflicting with *Amaleck*, *Moses* gets him up into the Mount to pray. *Moses* knew full well, that as Prayer without Faith, is but a beating of the Air, so Trust without Prayer, was but a presumptuous Bravado. He that promises to give, and bids us trust his promises, Commands, us to pray, and expects obedience to his Commands. He will give, but not without our asking, *Ezek.* 36. 37. *Pl.* 50. 15.

2. *Sincere, universal, spiritual, cheerful, constant, Obedience*; They that expect to enjoy what God promises, will be sure to perform what God enjoins, Holy trust takes it for a maxim, that he that contemns the Com-

* *Beatus ille,*
qui undique po-
tuit, firmus
stetit: qui ex-
hausit *Demonis*
pharetram nec
concedit, imo
ne de gradu
quidem transi-
permat est.

Nic.
d Isa. 72. 2.
e Psal. 112. 7.
91. 5.

46. 1, 2, 3.
f Mark 15.
43. τολμήσας.

* *invictus ad*
labores, fortis
ad pericula,
rigidus adver-
sus voluptates,
durus adversus
Illecebras.
Ambrosi
g Psal. 44. 3.

b Exod. 17.
9, 11.
Psal. 86. 1, 2.
1 John 5. 14.
Psal. 18. 2, 3.

mands.

wants of a God, as his *Supra*ign has no share in the promises of a God as *Al*sufficient. If we trust in the Son with a Faith of Confidence, we shall be sure to honour the Son with a *k* Kiss of obedience. Thus David, Psal. 119. 166. I have hoped for thy Salvation, and done thy Command, As Faith shews it self by its Works, Jam. 2. 18. So trust discovers it self by its obedience. Especially in the use of such means as God prescribes for the bringing about his appointed End. If Naman will prove, that he trusts the God of Israel, he must go and wash in Jordan. True indeed the waters of Bethesda could not cure, unless the Angel stirred those waters; and yet the Angel would not cure, without those waters. Paul trusted that himself, and the men with him should all get safe to Land, but then 'twas with this Proviso, that they all kept in the ship. Gods means are to be used as well as Gods Blessing to be expected.

3. Soul ravishing, Heart-inlivening Joy. Thus David, I have trusted in thy mercy, my Heart shall rejoice in thy Salvation, Psal. 13. 5. If the Lord be our trust and strength, he will be, he cannot but be our joy and k song. In whom believing let me add, in whom trusting, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of Glory, 1 Pet. 1. 8. Thus trust and joy are linked and lodg'd together in that Psal. 64. 10. The Righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him, and all the upright in heart shall Glory. See to what a Cue of Joy Habakkuk's trust had raised him, Hab. 3. 17, 18, 19. The Soul that truly trusts cannot but sit down under Gods shadow with great delight: His fruit must needs be exceeding sweet to our taste. Is m Jonah exceeding glad with the shadow of his Gourd? how then must a Saint needs rejoice in the protection of a God? And thus I have dispatched the second General proposed, viz. a full discovery of the Nature of trust in God, what it is, what it's ingredients, concomitants, effects. I proceed, to the third, viz.

III. What is, or at least ought to be the Grand, and Sole Object of a Believers trust?

Sol. The Text and Doctrine tells us. It is the Lord Jehovah, and he alone, He is, or at least should be,

1. The grand Object of a Believers trust. Put your trust in the Lord. In whom should a Dying creature trust, but in a living God! In stormy and tempestuous times, though we may not run to the Bramble yet we must to this p Rock for refuge. When the Sun burns hot and scorches, a Jonah's Gourd will prove insignificant; No q shadow like that of a Gods wings.

2. The grand Object of a Believers trust. Holy trust, an Act of worship proper and peculiar to an Holy God. No creature must share in it, whatever

i Psal. 2. 12.

Act. 27. 24. 31.

4 Isa. 12. 2.

1 Can. 2. 3.

m Jon. 4. 6.

n Psal. 4. 5.

o 1 Tim. 4. 10.

p Isa. 26. 4.

q Psal. 36. 7.

whatever we trust in (unless it be in subordination unto God) we make it our God, or at least our Idol. True trust in God takes us off the hinges of all other confidences; As we cannot serve, so we cannot trust God and Mammon. There must be but one string to the Bow of our trust, and that is the Lord. More particularly, we may not, must not repose an holy trust in any thing besides God, either within us, or without us.

I. Not in any thing within us: And so,

1. Not in our Heads, Understanding, Wisdom, Policy, No safe leaning to our own Understanding. Carnal Wisdom is but an *ignis fatuus*, *r* Prov. 3. 5. that misleads into a Bog, and there leaves us. Thy Wisdom, and thy Knowledge, it hath perverted thee, *Isa.* 40. 17. He that is wise in his own eyes, will be found at last to stand in his own light.

2. Not in our own hearts. It is *g* folly, the height of folly, to trust those Lumps of flesh, that are so *b* deceitfull so desperately wicked. *r* Prov. 28. 26. *b* Jer. 17. 9.

3. Not in our bodily strength and vigour. Those hands, that are now able to break a bow of steel, will eistoon hang down and *i* faint. The most brawny Arm, utterly unable to ward off or wrestle with the assaults of Death or Sickness. Those Legs, which now stand like Pillars of Brass, will shortly appear to be, what indeed they are, but sinking Pillars of mouldring clay. Raise the strength of man to its highest *Augm*, yet even then it cannot make so much as one *k* hair, either white or black. *t* Mat. 5. 36.

4. Not in any natural or acquired Excellencies. Be they what they will, or should they be far more than they are: Should all the Lines of Created Perfections meet in one man, as in their Center, yet surely that man, in that his best estate is altogether *i* vanity, and therefore not to be trusted in. *r* Psal. 39. 5.

II. Not in any thing without us. To trust in any Creature without us, is to feed not so much on bread as *m* Asbes, or rather on gravel-stones, which may easily break the Teeth, but can never fill the Belly. *r* *Isa.* 44. 20.

1. Not in riches: No not in the *o* abundance of Riches. Though riches encrease, our hearts must not be set upon them. Riches, when in their fullest flow are most *p* uncertain. Wilt thou therefore set thine eyes on that which is *q* not? Though they seem to have a being, yet they are indeed but fair faced nothings, gilded vanities. Or suppose they are, yet they next moment they may not be. Like Birds on the wing, ready to take their flight. Treasures then are not to be made our trust. They cannot *r* profit in the day of wrath. Nay, if we trust in our Riches on Earth, never expect a portion in Heaven. Sooner shall the *r* *Prov.* 11. 41. Camel go through the Eye of a Needle, than such an one pass through the gate of glory. *r* *Mat.* 10. 24.

2. Not

Psal. 115. 8.

2. Not in t Idols, Baal, Dagon, Ashtoreth, and the whole pack of those senseless abominations, cannot save themselves, much less can they preserve their bewitched Votaries.

3. Not in man, or humane Allies or Assistances, Psal. 62. 9, 10. Egypt and all her Chariots when trusted in, prove not supporting staves, but broken Reeds, which run into the side and bear not up, but wound the body, 2 King. 18. 24. Jer. 46. 25. If the shadow of Egypt be our trust, the end of that trust will be our confusion, Isa. 30. 2, 3. Might we build the nest of our trust on the Sons of men, Reason would bid us pitch on the topmost branches of the tallest Cedars, I mean those earthly gods, the Princes of this world. But alas these, though styled gods, must dye like men, Psal. 82. 6. yea, like other men. Their breath is in their nostrils, they soon return to their dust, from whence they sprang, and then all their thoughts, and with them, our hopes on them perish, Psal. 146. 4.

4. Not in any thing clad in mortal flesh. He that presumes to make flesh his Arm, will be sure at a long run, to find the Father of Spirits his Foe. Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his Arm, Jer. 17. 5. And thus we have dispatcht the third general.

IV. What are those sure and stable grounds on which Saints may firmly and securely build their trust on God?

Sol. There is nothing which the eye of Faith or Reason can discover in God, but the arm of Trust may safely lean on. But more particularly.

1. Gods Almighty Arm and Power. The Lord hath an Arm, an outstretched Arm; an Hand, an Omnipotent Hand: An Hand that spans the Heavens, that stretcheth them out as a Curtain, and spreadeth them out as a Tent to dwell in. On this Almighty Arm may Believers trust, the Lord is the strong and mighty God, Psal. 24. 8. That created the World with a word and can as easily speak or look it into its first Nothing. He is a wonder-working God, Exod. 15. 11. El Shaddai, Gen. 17. 1. Able to do *et in mensura*, far more exceeding & abundantly than we can ask or think, his vast power far exceeds our wants, prayers, thoughts, all that we can need, beg, imagine, we want much, can ask great things, can think greater. Our Imaginations exceed our Expressions: Yet Gods power far exceeds both / Open we our mouths never so wide, his open hand can more than fill them. Gods power then is a most firm Basis, whereon to fix our trust. Trust ye in the Lord Jehovah, for in the Lord Jehovah is Everlasting strength. Creature props are not able to bear the

a. 1 King. 8. 42.
o. Isa. 40. 13.

p. Isa. 51. 5.
q. Psal. 33. 9.

r. Eph. 3. 10.

/ Psal. 81. 20.
עזר
עולמים
Petra sacula
num.

the weight and stress of an immortal soul. They are sandy foundations, apt to sink and crumble under us. But an Almighty God is a Rock, a Rock of Ages, on which he that builds his confidence, though the Winds blow, the rain descends, and the Storms beat upon him, yet *shall he not fall*. On this power of God *Abraham* built his transcendent faith, and *David* his impregnable trust. 2 Sam. 22. 2, 3.

^a Mat. 7. 25.

[†] Rom. 4. 24.

2. *Gods infinite and free Goodness, Mercy, and Bounty.* The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption; His Bowels are as tender as his Arm is strong. He is no less willing than able to relieve; Therefore let *Israel* hope in the Lord. It is the Psalmists y inference. *Like as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* That Father, that sees his child in want, and pitties not, and pittying, if able, relieves not, forfeits the name of Father, and may write himself not Man, but Monster. It is enough for our heavenly Father, that he knows we have need of any thing. The Lord is all that to his people, yea, and infinitely more than that which *Isis* *Mammota* was to the *Egyptians*. A God full of Dugs, and whilst he hath a breast, let not Saints fear the want of Milk. The Character that the Heathens idolatrously gave their *Jupiter*, may far more truly, indeed only, be ascribed to our *Jehovah*, He alone is that *ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος* that *Optimus Maximus*, The best, as well as the greatest of Beings. Goodness is Gods darling Attribute; It is that which he looks on as his glory. *I beseech thee, saith Moses, shew me thy glory.* *Moses*, thy Prayer is heard, and it shall be answered. But what says God in answer to this request? See *Ver. 19.* *I will make all my goodness pass before thee.* The thing requested, was a view of Gods glory: The things promised was a discovery of Gods goodness. Which hints unto us, that however all the Attributes of God are in themselves glorious, yet the Lord glorieth most in the manifestation of his goodness. So then, though we have nothing to plead, or prevail, with God, as in or from our selves, yet there is an *Orator* in his own bosome, that will certainly and effectually intercede for our relief, and that is his goodness. This was that that boyed up *David*, this was the Cordial that kept him from fainting; *c* *I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.*

^x Psal. 145. 9.

^y Psal. 130. 7.

^z Psal. 103. 13.

^a Mat. 6. 33.

^b Exod. 33. 18.

^c Psal. 27. 12.

^d *אין אדם*

^e *אין אדם*

^f *אין אדם*

^g *אין אדם*

^h *אין אדם*

ⁱ *אין אדם*

^j *אין אדם*

^k *אין אדם*

^l *אין אדם*

^m *אין אדם*

ⁿ *אין אדם*

^o *אין אדם*

^p *אין אדם*

^q *אין אדם*

^r *אין אדם*

^s *אין אדם*

^t *אין אדם*

^u *אין אדם*

^v *אין אדם*

^w *אין אדם*

^x *אין אדם*

^y *אין אדם*

^z *אין אדם*

3. *Gods many, choice, exceeding great, and precious Promises.* These are the flagons that faith keeps by her, the apples she hath hoarded up in store, to revive and quicken in a day of swooning. Who will not trust the Word, the Promise, the Protest of the King of Kings. God hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. *d* *Heb. 13. 5.* The Greek here hath

- five Negatives, & may thus be rendred: I will not, not leave thee, nor he will I not, not forsake thee. Five times as one observes, is this precious Promise renewed, that we may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of its consolations, that we may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of its glory. Leave us God may to our thinking, but really he doth not, will not. Or if he leaves us for a time, a small moment, yet he will not forsake us utterly: Desert he may, but not dishonour, forsake us; it may be, in regard of Vision, not of Union; change his Dispensation, not his Disposition. *† Isa. 44. 2.* *Dost thou pass through the waters?* Thy God hath promised to be with thee: He was so with *Nahab* and the *Israelites* in the red Sea, and in *Jordan*. *Dost thou walk through the fire?* Warm'd thou mayst be, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. The three Children were living Monuments of this truth, God sent his Angel & delivered his servants that trusted in him. The Lord hath graciously engaged to create upon every dwelling place of Mount *Sion*, and upon her assemblies a cloud and a smoke by day, for her protection, and the shining of a flaming fire by night for direction, to be a Shield and Sun, yea, and shadow from the heat, and a place of refuge, and a Cover from storm and from rain. In such promises as these holy *David* trusted: This was his comfort in his affliction, the word of his God quickned him. Gods Promises are some of his Bonds and Obligations whereby he is held firmly bound to Believers. These faith makes bold to put in suit, to plead the security that God hath given: Lord, saith Faith, here is thy Bill obligatory, behold, see here thy hand and seal: Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the Signer, and Bracelets, and Staff. Thus *David*, *Psal. 119. 49.* *Remember thy word unto thy Servant, wherein thou hast caused me to hope:* The word of Promise was all that *David* had to shew, and he counts that enough to set his Faith on work.
- † 1 Cor. 10. 13.* *4 Gods inviolable, stedfast, never failing Faithfulness.* Gods goodness inclines him to make good Promises, and his faithfulness engages him to make those Promises good. If the word be once gone out of his mouth, ** Heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than one Iota of that word fail.*
- † Luke 21. 33.* *† Josh. 23. 14.* This faithfulness of God: *Joshua* asserts to the height: throws down the Gantlet, & does as it were, challenge all *Israel* to shew but that one thing that God had said them in, of all the good things that he had promised. If God in very Faithfulness afflicts, to make good his threatenings much more in faithfulness will he preserve, to make good his promises. God never yet did, never will fail that man that puts his trust in him, *Pf. 9. 10.* It is true God may frown on, yea, and severely lash a *Solomon*, a *Jedidiah*, when they break his Statutes, and keep not his Commandments:

ments: Nevertheless his loving-kindness he will not utterly take from them; nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. God never yet brake his word by deceiving, nor crake his credit by compounding, for less than was due, with any Mortal living. So faithful is God, so true to his Word, that let God but promise a Victory, and *Jehoshaphat* will sound an *Io Triumph* *m* before the Battel; And let but he threaten *Babylons* ruines, and the Angel cries, *Babylon* *n* is faln. Thus then Gods faithfulness calls for Saints trust, *Psal.* 146. 5, 6. *Psal.* 89. 33. *m* 2 Chron. 20. 17. &c. *n* Rev. 14. 8.

5. *Gods most holy, wise, powerful, gracious providence.* This also is a prop for trust. It is the *o* Lord, that gives unto all life, and breath, and all things. It is in him we all live and move, and have our being. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding of, and providing for the evil and the good. This divine providence the *Egyptians* acknowledged, and held forth in that significant *Hieroglyphick* of a Sun portrayed in a Ship tossed with wind and water, *Euseb. de prepar. Evang.* 1. 3. c. 3. God hath an eye in the wheels and motions of all inferiour creatures, *Ezek.* 1. 28, 30. Hence that holy Symbol of our English *Josiah*, *Edward* & *vice*. A Coelestial Globe with this Motto, *Nil sine Deo*. It is the Lord that feeds the *Sparrows* that have no *Barn*, and the *Ravens* that have no *Granary*. It is he that so gorgeously cloaths the *Lilies*, that have no *Disfaff*. Not a *q* Bird descends from his perch, not an hair falls from the Head without his Father. Fear not then, ye are of more value than many *Sparrows*. Where God sends mouths he will not grudge meat: And he that feeds the young *Ravens* will not starve the young *Heron*. Faith contemplates what God doth, recounts what God hath done, and from thence concludes what God will do. Hence it prays with the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 17. 7. and 31. 19. Faith reflects on former experiences, its own and others, and by the holy skill it hath in the Physiognomy of Providence, clearly reads and collects what God will do, in what God hath done. It casts its eye on,

1. *The experiences of others*, And judges her self to have an interest in those very Providences of grace, which they enjoyed. Thus the Church, a thousand years after that heavenly combate betwixt God & *Jacob*, tells us; That God found *Jacob* in *Bethel*, and there he spake with *us*, several ages before they were born: yet with us, i.e. with *Jacob* for our good, on our account, for our interest. Faith remembers there was once a *Joseph* in a Prison, a *Jeremy* in a Dungeon, a *Daniel* in a Den, a *Peter* in Chains, an *Hezekiah* on a supposed death-bed, and Providence assisted them, why not me? This poor man cried, and the Lord helped him,

o Aq. 17.

16. 28.

p Prov. 15. 8.

q Math. 10.

29. 30. 31.

y Mr. Heron when dying to his Wife, somewhat desponding by reason of her many children, and small provision for them.

s *Hol.* 11. 4. *Arrow/mth.* chain 401. 416 *Jest* on Jude. part. 1. p. 186.

Psal. 34. 6. and Our Father trusted, and thou didst deliver them; Psal. 22. 4, 5. Lord thou art the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, why then may not I expect Salvation from thee?

2. *It's own experiences.* Thus David confidently replies to *Saul*, that thought him no match for *Goliath*, *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lion and Bear, will also deliver me from this uncircumcised Philistine*; and thus *Paul*, He had the sentence of death upon him; the black stones were thrown down into the Urn against him, but his God, had, and did deliver, and therefore in him he trusts, that he will still deliver.

VI. And Lastly, I argue from *Those dear Relations in which the Lord is pleased to stand, and own, towards his people.* These cry aloud for their trust in God. Is he not our *Creator*? Hath he built the house and will he not keep it up? he that made us, will assuredly take care of us. We may safely give up our selves, our trust, our all to him, who hath given us our selves, and our all. This relation the Apostle makes the ground of trust. Is he not our Redeemer? will he part with his blood for us, and yet deny us bread? Is he not our *Father*? Are we not his Children? And shall he not provide for his own Children? *1 Tim. 5. 8.* Hath the great God put such a *Physiognomy* or natural affection into the *Bear, Pelican, Dolphin, Lions, Eagle* towards their young, and shall not he much more carry his own upon *Eagles* wings? *Exod. 19. 4.* Is he not our King, Head, and Husband? in a word, all those relations wherein we stand to God, or God to us, are stable grounds of our trust upon him, and strong engagements of his assistance to, and Providence over us. Thus much for the Fourth general, the Fifth followeth.

V. *What are those special and signal Seasons, which call aloud for the exerting of this Divine trust?*

This Holy Duty is indeed never out of season; So much the Original word *MY* for time imports. True indeed our Saviour saith, and faith truly, *My time*, i. e. my time of discovering my self to be a Wonder-working God, *is not yet come*. Yea, but all time, in respect of trust in God, is an appointed, yea, and an accepted time. The Wise man tells us, There is an appointed time for every purpose under Heaven. A time to kill and to heal, to plant and to pluck up, to weep and to laugh, to get and to lose, to be born and to die. In all these trust in God, is, not like Snow in harvest uncomely, but seasonable, yea necessary. There may be indeed a time, when God will not be found, but no time wherein he must not be trusted. *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi*, saith the Law, Let me add, *Nec Fiducia*, and 'tis sound Divinity. The

time

time of trusting in God cannot be laps'd. But more expressly. There are some special Instances and Nicks of time for Trust.

1. *The time of prosperity*: when we sit under the warm Beams of a Meridian Sun; when we wash our steps in Butter and our feet in Oyl; when the Candle of the Lord shines on our Tabernacle: when our mountain is made strong: Now, now is a time for trust, but not in our mountain, (for it is a mountain of Ice and may soon dissolve) but in our God. *Halcyon days* to some, are temptations to security, but to Saints, times for trust: to Carnal persons Lures and Duckoys to Pride, but to Believers, seasons for dependance. Now it is, that a Saint owns God as the Author, not thance or his own wit and industry, and implores his God to be the Preserver and Blessor of his enjoyments. When our Cistern is full, our trust must be not in it, but the *m* Fountain. At our fullest tables, we must acknowledge, that as bread is the *n* staff of our lives, so that staff cannot support, unless held in Gods Hand. Gods blessing is the only stay of that staff of bread. Man lives not by bread alone, indeed not so much by bread, as by the *o* word of Blessing that proceeds out of Gods mouth.

m Cant. 4. 15.
n Isa. 3. 1.

o Mat. 4. 4.

2. *The time of adversity*. This also is a seasonable time for trust; when we have no bread to eat, but that of carefulness: nor wine to drink, but that of affliction and astonishment: no nor water neither, but that of our own Tears. Now is a time, not for overgrieving, murmuring, sinking, desponding, despairing, but for trusting.

In a Tempest, then a Believer thinks it seasonable to cast Anchor upward. Thus did good *p* *Jehoshaphat*. O our God, we know not what to do, only our eyes are unto thee. *David*, what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. Times of trouble are proper times for trust, be the Trouble either Spiritual or Temporal.

p 2 Chron.

20. 12.

q Psal. 56. 3.

1. *Spiritual trouble*: Doth the child of light walk in darkness? in such midnight darkness, that he hath no light? now is a time to *trust* in the Name of the Lord, and to *throw* himself upon his God. Doth God take *Job* by the neck, and shake him even to pieces? Doth he set him up for his mark, and shoot such arrows into his Soul, that the poison of them drinks up his spirits, why now, when God is killing, yea, though he *x* kills, *Job* will trust. His Faith lives in the midst of death. Is a godly *Heman* so fear'd with the terrors of God, that he is even a distracted, though he be at his wits end, yet not at his faiths end, *Heman* will pray and trust, and hope even now, in this his day of Spiritual trouble.

r Isa. 50. 10.

t Job 13. 15.

u Psal. 88. 13.

15.

v Mic. 7. 7. 8. 9.

2. *Temporal*: Is it an evil time? A time of personal distress and visitation,

JH.b.3.17.18

Station: A time of wants or weakness, both the Barrel of meal begins to fail, and the Cuse of Oyl sink? Is there no fruit in the Vine, doth the labour of the Olive fail, are the flocks cut off from the field, and are there no Herds in the stall? Now, now is a time for Habakkuk to believe, believing to trust, and trusting to rejoice in the Lord, and so joy in the God of his Salvation. Throw a Jonah over board into the raging Sea, bury him alive in the Whales Belly, let the floods compass him about, and all Gods Billows pass over him, yet even then Jonah remembers God, and with the eye of his trust dares look towards his Holy Temple, Jon. 2. 1, to 9. Let holy Paul have the sentence of death upon him, yet he will trust, 2 Cor. 1. 9, 10. and so will David, though he walk in the very valley of the shadow of death, Phil. 23. 4. Be the trouble what it will be, Faith knows what to do, viz. to flye by the wings of trust, to him that is the hope of Israel, and his Saviour in the time of trouble, Jer. 14. 8. If. 33. 2. Trust in God in a sad condition, as a believers *Alexipharmacum praefratissimum*, his choicest medicine, preservative, Antidote against faintings, swoomings, sinking. Tis like that *Cornesium Indorum poculum*, which Philostrates speaks of, lib. 3. c. 1. viz. A Goblet out of which the Indian Princes drank, and then lookt on themselves as secure, from the assaults, either of fire, sword or poison.

VI. And lastly, *How Faith or Trust exerts, puts forth, demeanes and bestirs it self in these signal seasons.* Psal. 37. 39.

I. In times of *Eulms* and Prosperity. When it goes well with us and ours, when the Candle of the Lord shines on us, and our Tabernacle; when our lines fall in pleasant places, and our God makes us to lie down in green and Fat pastures; when we are as the wings of a Dove, covered with silver and her fathers with yellow gold; when with Judah, we wash our garments in wine and our cloaths in the Blood of grapes. Now, now is a fair opportunity for Faith or Trust to exert it self, yea and to appear gloriously. And indeed it requires no less than the utmost of Faiths skil, to steer the Soul handfomly in this serene and smooth-faced Calme. And so

First, Faith or trust looks upward, and there fixeth its Eye on God and on the things of God.

1. On God: and so Holy Faith delivers her self, in such Effata as these, viz.

How full soever my large Cistern be, It is the Lord, and the Lord alone that is the grand Fountain, or rather Ocean of all my enjoyment. All my Springs are in him. All my Streams are from him. Faith freely and humbly acknowledges, that all outward as well as inward blessings, that every

Psal 87. 7.

every good and perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights. Every good Gift, not only those transcendent of Grace and Glory, of union with Christ here, and full fruition of Christ hereafter, but also all temporal good things, be they more or less, even to an Hoof, or Shoo-licke, Faith confesseth that it hath nothing, but what is received from God. As God in mercy hath promised; so God in bounty hath given me these earthly enjoyments. It is the Lord that giveth, saith believing Job. Riches, Honour, Advancement, provision, they all come of God: Nor from the East, nor West, nor South, &c. neither this way, nor that way, nor any way of man, but God putteth down one, and setteth up another. Faith knows, that as all good things come from God, so all success in business, all blessings on our Labours, Callings, Affairs, is only from the Lord. It is the Lord alone that makes whatsoever Joseph doth to prosper. The Disciples may fish and tug all night, but till Christ comes, they can catch nothing. 'Tis the blessing of the Lord alone that maketh rich.

2. Since all that I have is received of God, I may not, I must not boast, crack, & glory, as if I received it not. Let others, saith Faith, thank their own labours, wisdom, policy, parts, wickedly sacrifice to their own nets and baits. Incense to their own drags; as if by them their portion were fat, and their meat plenteous. Faith leaves it to the Atheist to bless himself in being *Fortuna sua* *aber*, or with that Dughil wretch, who being excited to thank God for a rich crop of Corn, replies, *Thank God shall I?* Nay, rather thank my Dung-cart; Faith is of another kind of complexion. O far be it, saith she, that I should so much as in my heart, say, that my power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.

3. In as much as all that I have is from Gods blessing and bounty, this whole all shall be for his praise and Glory. Since all my enjoyments are of him, it is but just that all should be to him. He that is the Alpha, the beginning of all my mercies, shall be the Omega, the end and Center of all my Services. These Earthly treasures, saith Faith, shall be improved for high and Heavenly ends. Not thrown into the sink of a voluptuous punch, not so much on an Hawk or Hound, but laid, and lockt up in Gods Treasury, i. e. the backs and bosoms of Christs poor members. Faith is resolved to improve Satans greatest weapon (i. e. the World and its sweetest enjoyments) against himself, 'twill break his Hairy scalp with his own cudgels, turn his own Cannons against him, that is, by reducing all its worldly enjoyments into a serviceableness and subordination for the glory of God. Faith disdains to take that course

way,

6 Jam. 1. 17.

1 Cor. 4. 7.

d Mat. 6. 31.

1 Tim. 4. 8.

e Job 1. 21.

Psalm 121.

f Psalm 75. 6, 7.

g Gen. 39. 23.

h Mar. 4. 19.

i Prov. 10. 22.

1 Cor. 4. 7.

1 Hab. 1. 16.

m Du. 8. 17, 18

Dan. 4. 30.

n Rom. 11. 36.

* Dis te misso.

rem quod ge-

ris, imperas.

Huc omne prin-

cipium huc refer-

exitum. Horat.

way of curing the lust of the Eyes, by plucking them out, and to slake the thirst of Riches by a profuse casting of it into the Sea, to conquer the Worlds honour and applause, by turning *Hermits*, and hiding of its head in a lonely Cave. No, Faith prepares the Soul for a Nobler way of Victory, not by slighting the Bait, but by digesting of it into Food, by using of creature-comforts, as so many rounds in *Jacobs Ladder*, to Mount it self and others the nearest Heaven. Faith considers that the King of Heaven expects his Toll, Tribute, Custom, out of all our Receipts, that where much is given, there more is required: and justly fears, lest if it should not pay its God the Interest, it should, and that justly forfeit and lose the Principal. Therefore the more 'tis p'dung'd and dress'd, and pruned, the more abundant clusters it brings forth, and such as are acceptable to the palate of the Vine-dresser.

4. *Because all my enjoyments proceed from Gods free-Gifts, or rather his Loan, therefore they must and shall be readily surrendered to Gods Call.* If God will continue these outward comforts, saith Faith, I will own and improve his bounty, and yet if he thinks fit to call in his debts, I will revere, and submit to his Sovereignty. Let God give, and give abundantly, *Job* will bless. Let God take, *Job* knows, he takes but his own, and on that account will bless him then. *Job* has learnt to bless a giving God. Here are Lands, Houses, Children, Parents, dear enjoyments indeed, but yet such as are not my Fee-simple, saith Faith, I am only a Tenant at will. All these, yea and much more, nay, Life and all must and shall be denyed, resigned, when God calls for them. A Gracious heart knows that he cannot possibly make so much of his worldly enjoyments any other way, as by offering them up for Christs sake, and resigning them to Christs Call. *Marys* oyntment could never have been carried to a better market than it was, when poured so freely, on her dear Saviours head. Be a Believers enjoyments what they will, never so great, never so precious, suppose his vessel laden with Pearls, yet even these shall overboard, rather than hazard the swrack of Faith, or a good Conscience.

5. *Now I enjoy most from God, now even now 'tis necessary that I should trust mostly, yea, wholly and only in God.* Thus *Jehoshaphat*, 2 Cro 20. 12. Thus *Asa*, though he had an Army almost innumerable, no less than five hundred and fourscore thousand men, all of them mighty Men of Valour, yet he looks on all of them as Cyphers, as nothing without a God, and therefore now puts forth his trust in God, and flies to him for help. Here indeed was a Noble trust. 'Tis difficult to trust God in our greatest wants, but more difficult to trust him in our greatest Weal.

Weal. 'Twas a brave act of Trust in *Job*, when he resolves to *Job 13. 25*. Trust in God, though he killed him. An high attainment in *Paul*, when he had nothing, to be as one that possessed all things. Yea, but, when God quickens, when we are full and abound, when our Cup runs over, now to trust in a God and not in our Cup, when our sails are fill'd with a Trade-wind, then to confide only in our *Pilot*; when we have all things, and yet then to look on the creature as utterly insufficient, and to lean wholly on Gods All-sufficiency, This speaks the most spiritual, and refined Trust, and yet this is that which Faith exerts in it's fullest enjoyments. Where mercy abounds, Trust super-abounds, reputing the Creature as nothing at all, and esteeming God as All in All.

6 These outward enjoyments are indeed sweet, but my God the Author of them, is infinitely more sweet. They have all, even the most defecate of them, a Tang and Smack of the Cask and Chancel, through which they come. *At, at, Dulcius ex ipso Fonte* -- A Single God is infinitely more sweet, than the enjoyment of all created Good things, that come from him. Though indeed, I can smile, when my Corn and Wine, and Oil encreaseth, and bear a part with my Valleys, when they stand so thick with Corn, that they even laugh and sing. Alas, this without the enjoyment of a God is but a meer *Risus sardonicus*. The leaping of the Head after the Soul is gone. True indeed, these are some of Gods Love tokens, but what are these to his Person and Presence. These indeed are rich Cabinets, but Oh the *Light* *Psalm 4. 6.* of his Countenance, That, That's the Jewel. In having these I can say with *Esaiah*, I have *much*; but give me him, I can exult and *Triumphing* say with *Jacob*, I have *All*. *Gen. 33. 9. 11* These are some of his Left-hand favours, some of his Bottels of Milk, and gifts, a fit potion for *Ismael* and the sons of *Keturah*; But 'tis an *Isaac's* inheritance, waters of the upper fountains my Soul thirsts after, those Right-hand blessings, His *presence*, His Soul-ravishing presence, in *Psalm 16. 11.* which there is *fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore*. These may serve for my comfortable passage, but nothing but Himself can content and satisfy for my All-sufficient *Portion*. According to that, *Psalm 73. 26* *Psalm 36. 8.* He alone can fill up all the gaping chinks and chasms of my Soul. He is my *Sun and Shield*, *Psalm 84. 11.* my *Root and Branch*, *Isa. 11. 10.* my foundation and *Corner-stone*, *Isa. 28. 16.* my *Sword and Shield*, *Deut. 33. 29.* He only can answer all my desires, All my necessities. *Deus meus, & omnia*, my God and my All. Thus Faith fixes its aspect on God.

γ *Alisora sapio*

* *Excelsa pie-
mentis gene-osi-
tas s-p. a om-
nem rerum hu-
manarum speci-
em excelsa.*

γ *Psa. 19. 6, 7.*

*Valde prore-
batum sum, &c.*

*a. Aquila non
capit muscas,*

2. On the things of God: And so Faith concludes, *I have y higher and nobler projects, designs of deeper concernment then to sit down, ingulph and please my self in these poor, earthly, drossie, & dirty things here below. I have many Corruptions within, these are to be mortified; many Temptations without, these are to be resisted; many sweet motions and whispers of the Spirit, these are to be cherished: many weak graces, these are to be strengthened; many personal, relational duties, these are to be performed; in a word, an effectual Calling and Election to be made sure, this above all is to be regarded. Faith discovers a World beyond the Moon, and Trades thither: Leaving the men of the earth to load themselves with clay and coles, Faith pursues its staple commodity and traffiques for grace and glory. Thus *David*, when he had branded the Worldling for disquieting himself in vain, for heaping up riches, and knowing not who shall gather them, with an holy disdain turns his back upon the World, as not worth his thoughts, saying, *and now Lord, what wait I for? g. d.* It is true, I have Riches, and Honour, a Crown, a Kingdom, but is this the portion I could be content to sit down with? No, no, *My hope is in thee, Deliver me from all my transgressions, v. 8.* Let them that love the World enjoy it, but Lord, pay not my portion in such adulterate coyn, but in pardon of sin, and peace of conscience, this, this is that I wait for. Thus *Luther* having a rich Present sent him, professed with an holy boldness to God, *That such things should not serve his turn.* He was not taken with pebbels, his nobler sou flew higher, and was fixt on Pearls. It is Gods favour that the Subjects of the King of Heaven desire rather then his preferment; like him that preferred *Alexander's* kisses before a great sum of money, given by *Alexander* to another. Thus Faith looks upward on God, and the things of God, and acts accordingly.*

2. Faith or trust looks downward, on its fullst and sweetest Temporal enjoyments. And so,

1. It accurately Weighs these enjoyments in the Ballance of the Sannary, and so makes a just estimate of them as to their worth and value. Faith knows that generally men look at the things which are seen, & therefore the things that seem best, that glitter most, are the best delights of most of the children of men, the desire of their eyes, the joy of their hearts, These they over-rate, & not only esteem them highly, but adore them superstitiously, as a God, or their chiefest good. But now faith brings these to the touchstone and standard, and there interprets them as they are, according to their just value, finds them to be but the delights of sense, *for-
num ludibria*, the sports of nature, the trials of humane folly, at the best but

but helps of humane frailty. Particularly, faith passes at two fold judgement on them. Negative and Positive.

1. Negative. And so Faith concludes

1. *These, and all such like earthly enjoyments, never yet of themselves, benefitted any man for heaven.* True, some things are so good in themselves, that he that hath them cannot but be good, and the better for them: Such as are the grace of God to us, and the graces of the Spirit in us. These find us evil, but make us good: But no man was ever made good, merely by riches and worldly wealth. These indeed have found some really good, and made them less good then they were, and have found many seemingly good, whom they have made stark nought. How often hath a fat preferment spoiled a good Preacher, and caused him, with him, when the fish is caught, to lay aside his Net. Usually the more we have of this World, the less we mind the World to come. Our place in *Paris* makes us forget our portion in *Paradise*. That earth which we tread under our feet, gets up into our hearts, and makes them more earthly than the earth we tread on.

2. *This high mountain, on whose top I stand, adds not a Cubit to my stature in Gods eyes.* God values not, as men do, by the rate or Subsidy book. Not many Wise, nor many Noble, nor many Rich; but God hath chosen the poor of this World, Rich in faith. *Jam. 2. 15.*

3. Therefore my true blessedness doth not, cannot consist in the fullest confluence of these worldly enjoyments. I may not, I dare not wish that rich a fool sing a requiem to my soul, and bid it take its ease, for it hath goods laid up for many years. *Here is not my rest.* Faith, like the *Thistle*, finds no rest for the sole of its foot even in a deluge of Creature-comforts. Suppose a Believers sons as plants grown up in their youth, and his daughters, as corner stones polished after the similitude of a Palace, suppose his garnier full affording altimatter of store, His Oxen strong to labour, and his sheep bringing forth thousands, and ten thousands in the streets, though the bleared World should pronounce him a happy, that is in such a case, how would the Believer immediately reply with the Psalmists *Epanorthosis*, (or, in express contradiction rather to so gross a mistake) *yea, blessed are the people, they rather or they only are blessed which have the Lord for their God.* Thus Faith concludes Negatively.

2. Positively. That Divine Lesson which *Solomon* the wisest of men had, by such difficult and costly experiments at length learnt, Faith hath got by heart, and in the face of the World concludes with him: *f. Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.* The assertion is repeated, as in *Pha-* *(Ecc. 1. 2.)*

riches dream, to shew its certainty, and the term of Vanity doubled, to manifest the transcendency, and multiplicity of this Vanity, There is a fivefold Vanity, which Faith discovers in all its Creature-enjoyments, viz. in that they are.

2 Eccl. 1. 3.

1. *Unprofitable.* Thus the Preacher, *What g. profit hath a man of all his labour which he hath taken under the Sun?* What profit? Why, he hath filled his hands with Air, he hath laboured for the Wind, *Ecc. 5. 16.* Just so much, and no more, than *Septimius Severus* got, who having run through various and great employments, openly acknowledges, *Omnia fui, sed nihil profuit.* Creature-comforts are not bread, *Isa. 55. 2, 3.* They profit no more than the dream of a full meal doth an hungry man, or that Feast which the *b Magician* made the *German Nobles*, who thought they fared very deliciously, but when they departed, found themselves hungry. In a day of wrath, sickness, death, can riches profit? *Prov. 11. 4. Ezek. 7. 19.* Just as much as a bag of gold hung about the neck of a drowning man.

h Cor. 4. 13.
Comment, in
11a. 55. 2.

3 Eccl. 5. 13:
4 Prov. 30. 8, 9.

2. *Hurtful and pernicious.* Solomon observed that *Riches were kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.* Hence it is that *k Agur* prays against them: *Give me not riches, lest I be full and deny thee;* as if abundance made way for *Atheism*, in those that know not how to manage it. *Maximilian* the Second was sensible of this, who refused to board up a mass of Treasure, fearing lest by falling in love therewith, of a sovereign Lord, he should become a servant to the *Mammon* of unrighteousness. Now the hurtfulness of Creature-comforts shews it self in several particulars.

13 Tim. 6. 17.

1. *Faith knows that they are apt to puff up and swell the heart with the Tympany of pride.* Hence that great Caution, *Deut. 8. 10, to the end.* The usual attendants on riches are *Pride* and *Confidence.* Hence *Paul* to *1 Timothy*, charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded. How apt are men to be lifted up with the things of this lower World? Riches at once sink the mind downward in covetous cares, and lift it upward in proud conceits. To see a man rich in purse, and poor in spirit is a great rarity.

m Ezek. 16.
39. 58.

2. *Faith knows, that great enjoyments are great snares and powerful temptations to many other lusts,* such as are *Covetousness*; *Lust*; *Luxury*; *Security*, &c. The plenty of places oft occasion much wickedness in persons. Rich *Sodom* was a nursery of all impiety; *Jesurun*, when he waxeth fat, is apt to kick, *Deut. 32. 15.* And when *Israel* is fed to the full, then she commits abomination.

3. *Faith is sensible how apt temporal comforts are to make us sleight*

flight spiritual graces, and heavenly Communion.

1. *Spiritual graces.* Our digging for silver and searching for gold, makes us too too apt to neglect that which is better than thousands of gold and silver, even durable substance. The radiant splendor of these things here below, dazzles our eyes to those things above. Whiles *Martina* is much *cumbred about many things, she forgets to act *Maries* part * Luk. 10. 41. and to pursue that one thing necessary. How often do outward comforts entangle the spirits, weaken the graces, strengthen the corruptions, even of good men! There was a serious truth in that Atheistical scorn of *Julian*, who when he spoiled the Christians of their outward estates, told them, *He did it to make them more ready for the Kingdom of Heaven.* Many really godly lose much in spirituals by gaining much in temporals; they have been impoverish'd by their riches. They are indeed rich in grace, whose graces are not hindred by their riches, whose souls prosper when their bodies prosper. To see the daughter of *Tyre* come with her gift, to see the rich among the people, entreat Christs favour, and give up themselves to him; This indeed is a rare sight. To be rich or great in the World, is a great temptation. When we flourish in the flesh, we are apt to wither in the spirit. The scorching Sun-beams of prosperity too too often cause a drouth, and then a dearth, a famine in the soul, and make us throw of those robes of righteousness which the wind of affliction makes us to gird on the faster. The World is of an encroaching nature, hard it is to enjoy it, and not come into bondage to it. Let *Abraham* cast but a little more than ordinary respect on *Hagar*, and it will not be long ere she begin to contest with, yea, crow over her Mistress,

2. *Spiritual Communion with God.* Worldly comforts are always dog'd with worldly business, and this too often eats up our time for Communion with God. It is a very difficult thing to make our way into the presence of God through the throng of worldly incumbrances. Worldly employments & enjoyments are exceeding apt not only to blunt, but to turn the edge of our affections from an holy commerce with God. Faith knows what a Task, what an *Herculean* labour it is, after it hath past a day amidst worldly profits, and been entertained with the delights and pleasures a full estate affords, now to bring a whole heart to God, when at night it returns into his presence. The World in this case doth by the Saint, as the little child by the mother, if it cannot keep the mother from going out, it will cry after to go with her. If the World cannot keep us from going to Religious duties, it will cry to be taken along with us, and much ado there is to part it and our affections. Thus Faith discovers the danger and hurtfulness of Creature-enjoyments. But more than this.

CH

4. Faith

* *Felicitas
umbratilis.*

o *Psal. 30. 6, 7.
Summis nega-
tum est stare
diu.*

p *Job 19. 9.*

q *1 Cor. 7. 30.*

r *Quod mirum
pompa est.
Ostenduntur
istae res, non
possidentur &
dum placent
transiunt, Sen.
Epist 110.*

4. Faith knows that these outward things are perishing as well as unprofitable and hurtful. Mutable, inconsistent, fading. * Vanities, Bubbles, Pictures drawn in Icy Tablets, grass growing on the tops of houses. Faith hath seen and heard the Providence of God ring the changes of mens Estates all the world over. Now exalted and lifted up, within a while deprest and cast down. Now honourable eist soon abased, the rich becoming poor, *Naomi* becoming *Mara*, Hills levelled into Valleys, and great Mountains becoming plains. That spoke of the wheel which is now aloft, (*as the Captive King told his Conqueror*) is quickly turn'd to the ground and brought low. The best earthly estate, is in it self a tottering estate. No o mountain so strong but may soon be moved. What we call substance, Faith knows is but a shadow, and hath no continuance. There is no assurance in any earthly inheritance. How soon doth God sequester it from us, or us from it. These externals cannot be held with all our care, nor kept with all our policy and power. The best of earthly excellencies may soon be taken from us. *Job's* Crown quickly falls off from *Job's* head. Not only is all flesh grass, but all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field, *Isa. 48. 6*. Not only is man of a brittle Constitution in nature, but all the perfections which he hath, be they either Moral or Civil accomplishments, on this side grace are brittle too. Reason, Scripture, experience, abundantly attest this Truth. The q fashion of this world, saith the Apostle, passeth away: As fashions in the world alter and change every day, so doth the fashion of this World. Creature-comforts are not so properly possessions as Pageants, which whilst they please us, pass away from us in a moment. Those we have here are running banquets, delicate, and served in with state, but soon over.

5. Faith makes yet a farther discovery, and finds that these Creature-comforts are false, deceitful, lying Vanities. Which appears,

1. In the report they make of themselves, and of their own worth. If you look upon the bill of the Creature, it puts down not only an hundred for fifty, but a million for a mite. Like the Title-pages of some empty Pamphlets, more in them than in the whole book.

2. In the Promises which they make to us. It promises that in the enjoyment thereof we shall be happy, whereas we are both poor and miserable in the fullest possession of the Creature, unless God himself be our portion. It promises to ease us of our cares, yet it doth but multiply them like drink to a dropy-man, so far from slaking that it enflames the thirst. Riches are not food, but fuel to our desires; & are so far from satisfying, that they but widen the throat. They do not allay our appetite as bread doth, when received and digested, but enflame it, as oyl doth, when cast
into

into the fire. It promiseth to protect us but performs no more than the great tree doth from a soaking and lasting storm. It promises to continue with us, though Father and Mother forsake, yet it will not, whereas it usually proves like *Abraham's* Mule, then apt to go from under us, when we most need it. Thus the Creatures are deceitful, i.e. They are objectively deceitful, through the deceitfulness of our hearts and lusts, we are deceived about them, if not by them. They frustrate our expectation, when our hopes of advantage by them are at the highest: seldom or never make good to the enjoyer, what they promised to the expectant. Like *Jonah's* Gourd, when most needed, then they wither: Like *Hester's* invitation of *Haman* to a banquet with the King, which fill'd his bladder with windy hopes, but soon after ended in his Ruine.

6. And lastly, Faith knows that Creature comforts are unsatisfying *Ps. 55. 2.* Vanities. This the *Philosopher* saw by the dim eye of Nature, concluding, that the world being Orbicular, of a round figure, could never fill up the corners of an heart, which is Triangular. The Creature were a God to us, if it could do this to us: Kindle thirstings it may, but quench none: Can beget a thousand fears and cares, but quiet none: Here *she* eye is not *satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing.* The Soul still crying out, Give, give. It is God alone satisfies, *Ps. 36. 8, 9.* It is only a God in Christ that can give the soul rest, *Mat. 11. 29.* God would not rest from his works of creation, till man was formed: Man cannot rest from his longing desires till God be enjoyed, and then, and not till then can an holy *David* sing a Lullaby to his soul. *Return unto thy rest O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* Faith having thus exprest her judgment concerning the true Nature and worth of Creature comforts, concludes her work in three resolves.

1. *In the midst of these my enjoyments, I must take heed that my heart sits loose from them.* These handsome Pictures must be only hang'd on the wall, not glued to it. Though riches encrease, I may not, must not set my heart on them. Thus the *Psalmist*, *Ps. 62. 10.* Use them I may, love them I may not, *1 John 2. 15, 16.* My affections may perchance pitch, but must not fix on these things below, *Cob. 3. 2.* Look upon them I must with an holy indifferency, and use them as if I used them not, as possess them as if I possessed them not. The zeal of my Spirit must be for Heaven and Heavenly things, My soul must press hard only after God, as *David* did, *Ps. 63. 1, 8.*

2. *Though I have all these comforts yet I may not, must not immoderately, immoderately, earnestly delight and rejoice in them.* Thus the Apostle en, oyns, *1 Cor. 7. 29.* It remains, that both they that have wives be

* Eccle. 1. 2.

† Ps. 116. 7.

‡ 1 Cor. 7. 31.

be as if they had none; & they that rejoyce as though they rejoyced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not, & they that use this world as not abusing it. As we are apt to undergo, to do too little in heavenly things, so we are apt to overdo, or to do too much in worldly things.

Our two great failings, viz. That we do but make use as it were of those things we should enjoy, and that we enjoy those things we should only make use of. Oh, the Divine Art of holy moderation in the use of our sweetest worldly enjoyments is known and practised by few.

3. And lastly, *As I may not over-love them, nor imprudently delight in them, saith Faith, so least of all may I put the least trust or confidence in them.* I must not in the least lean upon them. Not say to Gold, to fine gold, *I thou art my confidence*, Job 21. 24. *I. s.* My soul may not securely rest and rely on gold, or golden enjoyments, as if these could stand by me, when all friends fail, as if these would not see us want any thing, nor suffer us to be wronged as long as they last, which God knows, is but for a moment. All these enjoyments can neither make me better nor wiser, nor render my life more safe & comfortable, nor sanctifie our souls, nor satisfie our desires. Therefore saith faith, I will trust in God only, whom I can never trust too much, not in the creature, wch I can never trust too little.

II. *In times of sadness, afflictions, wants, sufferings, miseries*; when the hand of the Lord is gone out against us, and he greatly multiplies our sorrows, when he breaks us with breach upon breach, and runs upon us like a Giant, when his Arrows stick fast in us, & his hand presseth us sore, when he sows Sackcloth on our skin, and defiles our horn in the dust, when we are fain to eat ashes like bread, and to mingle our drink with weeping. Now, now is a time for a Saints trust to bestir it self to purpose. In this storm and tempest, wherein the waves mount up to heaven, and go down again to the depths, Faith sits at Helm, and preserves the Soul from shipwrack. Faith takes his Serpent by the tail, handles it, and turns it into an harmless wand, yea, into an *Aarons* rod, budding with glory and immortality: Faith encounters this seeming *Goliath* of Affliction, grapples with it, not as a match, but as a vanquish't underling. Let misery dress her self like the cruelest fury, come forth guarded with all her dismal attendants, sighs, groans, tears, wants, woes, Faith sets its foot on the neck of this Queen of fears, insults and triumphs over her. When the heart and flesh are apt to fail, when Soul and spirit are apt to sink, and swoon away, faith draws forth its bottle, and administers a reviving Cordial. In a word, in a Sea, an Ocean, a Deluge of trouble, amidst all storms, winds, tempests, yea, an *Herricane* of sorrows and miseries, Faith knows where and how to cast Anchor. According to that of our Saviour,

Saviour, *μη ταραχῆς ἡ καρδία ὑμῶν*. Let not your heart be troubled, so troubled, as a ship tost in a Tempest: ye believe in God, believe also in me. Faith is that great Antidote, Cordial, Panacea, Catholicon, Heal-all of all Diseases: This is that that makes a believer live in the midst of Death. But more particularly in this tempestuous Condition, Faith doth these three things.

1. It warily avoids some dangerous Rocks and Quick sands.
2. It heedfully looks to its bottom in which it sails.
3. It accurately observes its Compass by which it steers.

I. There are some Rocks, Shelves, Quick-sands, like Scylla and Charybdis, against which in such a dark Condition, the Soul is apt to split it self. These Faith avoids with utmost Care, they are six.

1. Distracting, distrustful, carking, corroding, heart-dividing, heart-stabbing Cares. Faith according to the Apostles command, *μηδὲ οὐ φρονεῖτε*: is carkingly careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication makes its requests known to God. True indeed, a Believer is not, may not, dares not be, slothfully, negligently careless of his Body, Estate, Relations, Affairs, particular calling, Rom. 12. 17. Faith knows, that he that endeavours not by honest, prudent, diligent, care and fore-sight, to provide for his own is worse than an infidel. And yet Faith is far from all carking Cares, such as distract the head, and divide the Heart from other and better things. Faith takes no thought for its life, what it shall eat, neither for the Body, wherewith it shall be clothed, Faith leaves that to God, who feeds the Sparrows and clothes the Lillies. 'Tis for Gentiles and unbelievers to cry out solicitously, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithall shall we be clothed? My Heavenly Father knows that I have need of all these things. It belongs to him to provide. 'Tis his work, I leave it with him. All that Care, I cast upon him, he doth and will care for me, I may not, must not, saith Faith, speak against God, as did the Israelites, saying, Can God furnish a table in the Wilderness? As he hath given waters, can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?

2. Carnal Counsel, using unlawful and Carnal Confidence, trusting in Lawful means. Say not when God pursues, *et Asbur shall save you*, and you will ride on horses. In sickness Faith will not run first to the Physician. That was Good *Asa's* great sin. 'Twas holy *David's* great failing, to say, (though but in his Heart) Nothing better for me then to escape into the Land of the *Philistines*. Alas poor *David*, to what a shift art thou now driven? what to the uncircumcised *Philistines*? Is it because there is not a God in *Israel*? Oh, thou wilt quickly find this

Starting Hole, to be only a going out of Gods Blessing, into a warm Sun. To think by sinning to avoid suffering, is by saving the finger, to make way for a Itab at the heart. To pursue, and obtain Deliverance, by unlawful ways, is to fish with, and lose, an hook of gold, and only to catch a *Gudgeon*, to preserve the Body, but to destroy the Soul.

3. *Stinting, and limiting the Holy one of Israel, to this or that particular, means, way, time, and manner of deliverance:* So as to say, if God help not this way, nothing will do. If not now, never. Faith remembers, This was the *Israelites* God provoking Sin. They *x limited the Holy one of Israel*. Thus *Naaman*, 2 Kings 5. 11. *Behold*, saith he, *I thought he will surely come out; and stand, and call; and strike*, and no other way will serve him. He thought thus, and thus, but the man was no less Blind, than Leprous. He was at once both proud and vain in his imaginations, and he shall know that the Almighty will not fail by his narrow compass, nor dance, as I may so say, after his *Pipe*. God hath more ways to the wood than one, and always more than many out of it, though we at present see them not. God hath Extraordinary means to bear up, when Ordinary ones fail. God can turn *Poysons* into *Antidotes*; *Hindrances* into *Furtherances*; *Destructions* themselves into *Deliverances*. Has *Elijah* no meat? Rather than fail. The devouring *7 Ravens* shall be his *Caterers*. Is *Jonah* in danger of Drowning? Rather than sink a *Whale* shall have commission, to be both his ship and Pilot too, to set him safe on shore. Faith knows that an Almighty God can work, with, yea and without, above, contrary to means, and doth on purpose many times stain the pride and glory of some means, that seem most probable, that we may observe and adore his wise Providence in finding out, and blessing the use of others more unlikely; that we may prefer his *Jordan*, before our *Abanab*.

4. *Impatient fretting, murmuring, and quarrelling against Gods Dispen-sations.* This was poor *Jonah's* great stumble. *Peevish* man! *Doest thou well to be angry*, and that with thy God? yea saith he, *to the very death*. *Jon 4. 9.* The most foolish answer that ever dropt from the mouth of an Holy man. Humble *Aaron* was better instructed. He knew it was no safe kicking against the Pricks. That nothing was to be got by striking again, by repining against God, but more blows. And therefore when God had killed both his sons at a blow, He humbly holds his peace: his heart and tongue were both silent. True indeed, we may not be senseless and stupid under sufferings. Had all the *Martyrs* had the *Dead Palsie*, before they went to the stake, their sufferings had been far less Glorious. But yet, though we may not be stupid or

Stoical,

Stoical, we must be patient and submissive. Though we may not be like the *Caspian Sea*, that neither ebbs, nor flows, yet we must take heed of being like swelling, roaring waves and billows. Though Gods Turtles may, through infirmity flutter, yet they may not be like Bulls, when caught in a net, raving. *I was dumb*, saith David, *because thou didst it*. Away then with those surly looks, that do as it were, enter a protest against what we suffer : nay more, beware of those murmuring echoes and replies of Spirit within, against God, who though they seem to yield and run, yet, with the flying *Parthian*, shoot their Arrows backward in discontent against God.

Psal. 39. 9.

5. *All sinful and ungrounded Doubting of Gods love, in and under sufferings.* How Gods heart inclines, cannot infallibly be gathered from Gods Hand. Faith many times discovers Love in Gods Heart, when it sees nothing but frowns on Gods forehead : and knows, that frequently when his tongue chides, His Bowels yearn. *Is Ephraim a dear son ? is he a pleasant child ? Is he ?* *Alas no*, Rather he is a pettish, untoward, undutiful child. True, but yet a child, and therefore, *since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, my Bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him*. Yea more, Faith is so far from arguing, that God has thrown His Love out of His Heart, when he Takes his Rod into his Hand, that it rather from thence argues the quite contrary. I am now therefore beloved, because chastised, *whom I love, I rebuke and chasten*. Faith knows, that a Fathers Correction, is so far from being an argument of wrath, that it is one of the clearest evidences of Love. Better far to be a chasten'd son, than an undisciplin'd Bastard : No anger like that, *Isa. 1. 5. Why should ye be stricken any more ? ye will revolt more and more :* and *Ezek. 16. 42. I will be quiet, and I will be no more angry. Ephraim is joyned to Idols, Let him alone*, *Hos. 4. 17.* Then is God most fangry of all, when he refuseth to be angry.

d Jer. 31. 20.

e Rev. 3. 19.

Amos. 3. 2.

Heb. 12. 6.

*f Tunc maximo
irascitur, quan-
do non irascitur,
Super omnem
iram miseratione
ista, Bern.*

6. *Fainting, sinking, desponding, despairing, under Gods Correction.* As Faith looks upon it as a great sin to despise the Lords chastening, so it holds it for no small infirmity, to faint, when corrected by him, *Heb. 12. 6.* This was that for which David so roundly chid, and rated his Soul, *why art thou cast down O my Soul, why art thou so disquieted within me ?* Trust thou in God, *Psa. 42. 11. If thou faint in the day of Adversity, thy strength is but small*, *Prov. 24. 10.* It argues thee to be a man of a short, narrow, pusillanious, poor, low Soul, to faint and sink in such a day : Thus we have shewn you the Rocks, the Dangerous Rocks, which Faith warily avoids.

II. Faith heedfully looks to it's Ship, or Bottom, in which it sails. Wherein she views the Keel, Ballast, Sails; takes care that these be tight, and in good condition.

1. *The Keel, Bulk, or Body of the Ship, in which Faith sails, and That is holy Contentation.* This was the Grand, and Highest Lesson, that ever a Believing *Paul* learnt, and practised, viz. * *In every state Therewith to be content.* What some observe of that earthly Angel, That glory of Her Sex, the Lady *Jane Gray*, That she made misery in self seem amiable, and that the night cloathes of Adversity did as much become her, as her day-dressing, is much more true of Holy Contentation, It renders every condition, even the Blackest, lovely. An afflicted Christian, *If contented*, may Truly say with the *Sponse*, Can. 1. 5. *Though I am black, I am comely.* Faith therefore mainly looks to this, and professes, that though she cannot be satisfied with the whole World for her portion, yet she must, will be, and is contented with the least pittance of it for her passage. Has an *Agur* Food, what though Course of ordinary Commons? *Prov.* 30. 8. yet 'tis Food: Has *John Baptist* raiment, what though of *h* Camels hair? yet 'tis Raiment: And so long Faith looks upon her self, as obliged to be therewith content, 1 *Tim* 6. 8.

ענין
קני

h *Mat.* 3. 4.

2. *The Ballast that poises the ship, and that's Humility,* This is that that keeps the Soul steady and makes it ride out the Storm. Pride is that, which swells the heart. Now when a member is swollen, though it grows bigger, yet it grows weaker, and so the more unfit and unable to bear any burthen laid upon it. 'Twas Humility that steel'd *Athanasius* against all his adversaries and sufferings, in that he was, as *Nazianzen* reports him, as truly low in heart, as really high in worth. The Humble Soul judges it self *i less then the least of mercies*, justly obnoxious to the greatest Judgments, and therefore no wonder if it can patiently want or undergo any thing.

i *Gen.* 32. 10.

3. *The sails whereby this well ballasted Ship is carried, and that is Heavenly mindedness.* This indeed is Faith's *Top*, and *Topgallant*, whereby it sails with a full forewind into it's Port and Haven. Faith, minds, savours, sets it's affection on things above, not on things below, *Col.* 3. 2. It's heart is, where it's treasure is, in Heaven. Faith knows, that mixture of earth and dross much weakens the Soul, and makes it unable to suffer, whereas a Soul quickned with heavenly mindedness, that flies high and looks beyond the Stars, concludes, that a little, a very little of the dreggy creature will serve turn to pass it through this worldly Pilgrimage, and this greatly enables for suffering, and thus Faith heedfully looks to her bottom.

III. Faith

III. Faith accurately observes its Compass by which it steers. Now there are several points in Faiths Compass, or if you will, the e are several choice Maxims or Axioms of Faith by which a Believer sails, in and through the Blackest Storms and Tempests. Such as these,

I. *What ever the stone be that's thrown, 'tis the hand of Heaven flings it.* In all the evils we either fear or feel, faith looks beyond the Creature, and carries up the heart unto God. No evil in the City, no penal evil, either on me or mine, but the Lord hath done it. Thus David, Dumb, *Amos 3. 9.* because thou didst it, Psal. 39. 9. and the Lord shall bid Shimei curse, 2 Sam. 16. 10. David could read Gods hand at the foot of the Commission, though his Commanders could not. Thou couldest have no power against me, unless I given thee from above, saith our Saviour to *Joh. 19. 11.* Pilate. And holy Job when plundred of all, saith not, The Lord gave, and the Chaldeans and Sabeans have taken away, the Lord enricht, but Satan hath rob'd me: No, but as if they all had been but Cyphers, and meer standers by, The Lord gave, and the Lord only, or a least chiefly hath taken, Job 1. 21.

II. *Let the King of Heaven do his worst, yet even then, he can do no wrong.* This is a grand Maxim in the Rolls of Eternity. One of the Fundamental Laws of Heaven; and that because,

1. God is the most Sovereign God, the Supreme Lord, that knows no Law but his own Will, which is the highest and the most unerring rule of Righteousness, Gods hand is Gods only rule, and therefore what ever Line he draws, it must needs be right. Our God is a Law to himself, who only can write on his Imperial Edicts and proceedings, *Ex. pro ratione voluntas.* God doth and may justly do whatsoever pleaseth him, Dan. 4. 35. and can most justly resolve the Reason of all his Actions into his own Will, that great Potter may do with his clay, what he pleaseth, and that without the least controul or contradiction, Rom. 9. 20, 21. On this account, Faith counts it wisdom, not to play the censorious Critick on Gods administrations, considering that he alone is *Ανὴρ Θεοῦ καὶ ἐκείνου Θεοῦ.* According to that of Eliphaz, Job. 33. 12, 13. God is greater than man, why dost thou strive against him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters.

2. God as he is most just in himself, so also he acts most justly to me saith a believer. Faith justifies God in all his proceedings, i. e. subscribes and gives Testimony to the Righteousness of God, even in his sharpest Corrections. Thus David, I know O Lord that thy judgments are in right. Thus the Church, when under the Babylonish Captivity, *Psalm 119. 75.* (the heaviest Judgment ever inflicted on any people) yet then humbly

n Lat. 5. 18.
N. h. 9. 33.

sets our seal to Gods Justice. *The Lord is a Righteous, for I have rebolled against him.*

III. *It is not fit that poor, weak, short-sighted, sinful creatures should be their own Carvers.* If they should, they would, like rash children, cut either too much, or too little, or their own fingers. Well for us, that as our 6 Times, so our Conditions are not in our own, but in Gods hands. Not what I please, saith faith, but what my God pleaseth. He knows best what's good for his people, and I know, had God granted my requests, and fulfilled my desires, I had long since been undone. The cooling drink which I so passionately desired in my burning Paroxysm, would have added to my flame, and quickly dispatched me to the house of darkness. Hence it was, that the honest Shepherd, being askt, *what weather it should be to day*, replied, *even what weather I please.* Not so, saith the other, *but what pleaseth God.* Yea so, replies the Shepherd, *for what ever pleaseth God, shall be sure to please me.*

IV. *Better to want outward Comforts, than enjoy them without my Fathers good Will.* Israel had been better to have been without Quails. They had sour sauce to their sweet meat; while the Flesh was in their mouths, the 7 Plague of God was in their nostrils. You will needs have this, and that, and t'other thing, why, Take it, saith God, but then take my Curse with it too: The Sack, but poison with it. You shall have it, but in wrath, See 1 Sam. 8. 5, 6, 10, 11, 12. Hof. 13. 11. Rachel you will have children, or else you will take pet and 9 die. You shall have children, a Benjamin to your Joseph, which yet shall prove a Bane. His Iniquity will prove your Exile: his life your death, Gen. 35. 18. Better were it for David to be without Michol, than that she should, being enjoy'd, become a snare.

V. *Seem it never so ill, yet it is really well.* On these two accounts
1. *It cannot but be well with him, with whom God is.* 'Twas not ill with the three children, though in a fiery Furnace, so long as God was there, Dan. 3. 29. Suppose David walking in / the Suburbs of death and danger, yet not ill with him; because God with him. When God says, *I will be with you*, as he has, *Isa. 43. 2.* and I feel him, saith faith, it is infinitely more to me, than if he should say, peace, health, credit, honour, plenty, shall be with thee. *God being with me, is all these, and infinitely more.* In these I could have but a particular good, in a single God I have all good. Now God, who is with his people at all times, is most with them, and most sweetly with them in the * worst times. As their afflictions increase without, so do their consolations within, 2 Cor. 1. 5. when the child is most sick, then it is most dandled on the mothers knee; when it begins to faint,

* Domitian in
Jovis sinu.
Sueton.

saint, then is the Closest ranfack for the choicest Cordial. This blessed Baynham found, when at the stake he told the bloody Papists, O ye Papists, said he, you talk of Miracles, behold here a true one, These flames are to me a bed of Roses. God is wont to give Believers in such a time, their exceedings, their five wessels. That part of the Army, which is upon Action in the field, and upon hard service, shall be sure to have their pay. What are all the promises, but vessels of Cordial wine, tunnd on purpose against a groaning hour, when God usually and speedily broacheth them, *Psal. 50. 15.*

2. *All is well that ends well.* Now, saith Faith, all sad and gloomy dispensations have sweet ends, whether I respect God or my self, *Psal. 118. 18.*

I. In respect of God. And that,

1. For the manifestation of his infinite wisdom. Who so contrives the passages of his Providence, as that one shall qualifie another. God knows, that should I always prosper, I should have been apt to swell and presume, and therefore he pricketh my bladder, to let out that wind. Hast I been always fed with sweet meats, 'Tis very probable I might have surffited, and therefore he mingles my sweets with these tart ingredients. Were not this Bile added to my Treble, I should never have made any Harmonious Musick.

2. For the declaration of his Almighty Power. God many times brings his people into such a condition as not to know what to do, that they may know now what the Lord can do. Thus, *Deu. 32. 36, 39.* The Lord shall judge his People, when he sees their power is gone, and see now, That I, even I am he, and there is no God with me. Thus, *Psal. 106. 8.* Nevertheles he saved them for his name sake, but what Name? even that Glorious one of his Power, that he might make his Power known.

II. In respect of Believers. The life of every Saint is a Tragedy, and the last Act of it crowns the whole Play. Mark the upright man, and behold the just: for that End of that man is peace. Our office *Psal. 37. 37.* the Ester shall come mead. This affliction and that affliction, yea the whole series of them shall worke together for my Good *Rom. 8. 28.* Saints Good is Gods aim. As love is the principle he constantly acts from, so the Saints good is the end he propounds and aims at in All his dispensations. From this he never swerves. The fire of love never goes out of his Heart, nor the Saints good out of his Eye. When he frowns, chides, strikes, yet then his heart burns with love, and his thoughts are to do them good. *Ier. 24. 5.* — and *29. 11.* *Deu. 32. 16.* But what good? Much every way, chiefly with respect to their Corruptions, graces, services, glory.

I. Saints.

1. *Saints Corruptions to purge and subdue them.* This is all the fruit, the taking away of their sin, *Ila. 27. 9.* Afflictions are Gods brine and pickle to preserve the Saints from putrifying. *Pauls* thorn in the flesh, was given him to prevent and mortify Pride, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* All the harm which the fiery Furnace, did the young men in *1 an. 3. 24. 25.* was but to burn off their cords. Our lusts are cords, cords of vanity, fiery tryals sent on purpose to burn and consume them. Adversity like Winter-weather, of great use to kill weeds and vermin, which the Summer of prosperity is wont to breed. God is said to rub hard many times to fetch out the dirt that is ingrain'd in our Nature. This Thunder serves to clear the Air from infectious Vapours. This bitter portion purges out ill humours. Be the Teeth of thy troubles never so many, never so sharp, 'tis but to file off thy Rust. This tempestuous tossing in the Sea, will more purge the Wine from its Lees. It clarifies the Soul. According to that, *Zeck. 14. 9.* *I will bring a third part through the fire, to refine them as silver.*

2. *Saints Graces.* And that, *For their Tryal and experience.* That the trial of your Faith, &c. *1 Pet. 1. 6.* The fire tries the Gold as well as the Touch-stone. Diseases not only need, but try the Art of the Physician, and Tempests the skill of the Pilot. The Saints sufferings are but as so many Touch-stones. Now, now shall the Saint clearly know, whether the Conscience be sound or foundred, if it will pace well in rough ways. Here, here is the Faith, i. e. the Tryal of the Saints Faith and patience, *Rev. 13. 10.*

3. *For their Increase and Growth.* The snuffing of the Candle makes it burn the brighter. Hence it is that the Saints glory in Tribulation, *Rom. 5. 5.* because their sufferings add strength to their graces. Never are Gods spiritual Nightingales apt to sing more sweetly, than when the thorn is at their Breast. Saints are indeed made of precious metal, and yet they are too too apt to lose their edge. Hence it is that God by afflictions whets and sharpens them. He beats and bruises his links, to make them burn the brighter, loads his choicest Ships with sufficient Ballast, to make them sail the steadier: bruises his Spices to make them send out an Aromatick Savour, *Jer. 23. 21. Isa. 26. 10. Heb. 12. 10.*

Object. But I find not this precious benefit.

9. *Sol.* Afflictions do not presently work, as least thou mayst not presently feel their operation. As Christ to Peter, what I doe, thou knowst not now, *John 13. 7.* but thou shalt hereafter: So afterward it brings forth the fruit of Righteousness, *Heb. 12. 11.*

3. With

3. *With respect to Saints future services.* Great sufferings are many times sent to prepare Saints, for extraordinary Services. See it in *Joseph and Paul*; *Joseph* thrown into a pit, sold a slave into *Egypt*, there cast into a prison, by all fitted for a Palace, and to be a Nurling Father to the Church. God bestows more Chopping and Hewing on Corner-stones, because he intends, they shall not only support, but adorn the Building. God means to build high upon them, therefore lays his foundations very low; Intends to sell these Diamonds at an high rate, and thence it is, he spends so much time and Art in cutting them.

4. *With respect to the furtherance of their future Glory.* Christ went from a Cross to Paradise, so do Christians. The Master was made perfect through sufferings, Heb. 2. 10. So are Saints his Servants. Though the Saints Cross cannot merit, yet it makes way for a Crown of Life, Jam. 1. 12. Their light afflictions which are but for a moment, occasionally work for them, a far more excellent and eternal weight of Glory, 2 Cor. 4. 17.

VI *Be it really ill, never so ill, yet it might well be worse.* Be the suffering what it will, yet whilst here, whilst above ground, 'tis far less than I have * deserved. Blessed be God, cryed out that * Man of God, when in the *Paroxysm* of his Gout, this though sharp is not Hell, the worst that we can feel here is not the 1000000 part of what we have deserved hereafter. Every step on this side Hell is mercy, saith a sensible Believer. God is gracious in his greatest severity, remembers mercy in the midst of Judgment. As 'tis said of *Asbur*; his Shoes were Iron and Brass, yet he dipt his foot in Oyl, Deut. 33. 24, 25. So God tempers his greatest severities with the Oyl of Mercy. Corrects but in measure, Is. 17. 6. nay in mercy, in infinite mercy. I that have deserved the blow of an Executioners Axe, am sent away only with a lash only of a Fathers Rod. God only lops off some luxuriant branches, when in Justice he might cut up the Vine, both Root and Branch, and cast them into Everlasting flames.

VII. And lastly. *Be it now never so ill,* it will certainly be * better. Thus the Psalmist All thy waves are gone over me, yet the Lord will command his loving kindness, Psal. 42. 7, 8. Thus the Church, Mic. 7. 7, 8, 9. More particularly Faith concludes.

1. *My afflictions, though Lasting, will not be Everlasting.* Though the night be dark and long, yet there will come a day-break, and comfortable Dawn, my God will not always chide, neither will he contend for ever, Is. 57. 16 Rev. 2. 10.

2. *My greatest extremity of distress, is Gods fairest opportunity for Deliverance.*

M m m

* Ezr. 9. 13.
* Mr. 17th.
Lapfus Sen,
Trag.

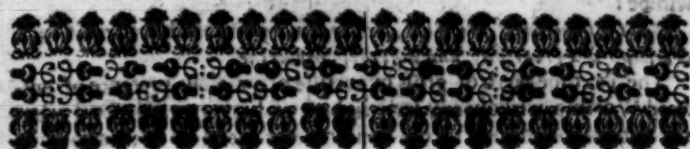
x Nemo despo-
ret meliora.
Lapfus Sen,
Trag.

Deliverance. When the *Cassians* are most infested with Locusts, then and not till then do the *Solencidian* Birds come in to their assistance, *Cant. Hrr. l. 6. v. 31.* Now, now will I arise (saith the Lord, *Deut. 32. 36.* Cum duplicantur lateres, venit Moyses. In the Mount there will God be seen, *Gen. 22. 14.*

3: And lastly. * *Heaven will pay for all at last. where every Tear shall be wiped off,* *Rev. 21. 4.* The pleasantness and security of the Port, will make more than full amends, for the danger and difficulty of the passage. And this is that wherein Faith triumphs, as knowing that he that for Christs sake, in obedience to Christs Will, in conformity to Christs Word, in aiming at Christs Glory, wears the sharpest Crown of Thorns here, shall by Christ have his Temple incircled with the fairest Crown of Glory hereafter. As in this life an hundred fold, so in the world to come, *Life Eternal, Mark 10. 30.*

* *Supervata
Tellus Sydera
donat Boet.
Falsa post fata.
Ad delicias ju-
vat ire periculis.
Ex mru
amc.*

How



How may we cure Distractions in holy Duties?

Matth. 15. 7, 8.

Ye Hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesie of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

IN this Chapter you will find a Contest between Christ and the Pharisees, about their Traditions and old Customs, which they valued above the Commandments of God, as it is usual with formal men to love Chaires of their own making, and to make Conscience of a Tradition when yet they can dispense with a Commandment, and thereby discovering themselves to be very hypocrites, who are more in Externals than in Internals, in shew than substance, minding the formality rather than the spirit and life of Service to God; our Lord confirms his censure by the testimony of the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Ye Hypocrites, &c.*

I shall not stand explaining the words. [*Drawing nigh*] is a phrase peculiar to Worship, especially to Invocation, [*mouth and lips*] are put for all external Gestures, and that bodily exercise which is necessary to the worship of God, especially for words. [*But their heart is far from me*] it chiefly intendeth their habitual averteness from God, but may also comprize the wandring and roving of the mind in duty, which is a

degree and speice of it, of that I shall treat at this time, and my Note will be:

That distraction of thoughts, or the removing of the heart from God in Worship, is a great sin, and degree of hypocrisie.

The Text speaketh of gross hypocrisie or a zealous pretence of outward Worship without any serious bent of heart towards God; but any removal of the heart from him in times necessary to think of him is a degree of it; for though distractions in Worship are incident to the people of God, yet they are culpable, and do so far argue the relics of hypocrisie in them. I shall shew,

1. The greatness of the sin.

2. The Causes.

3. The Remedies.

First, That there is such a sin, sad experiences witnesseth, vain thoughts intrude importunately upon the soul in every duty, in hearing the word we are not free, *Ezek 33.31.* nor in singing, but chiefly they haunt us in Prayer, and of all kinds of prayer in mental Prayer, when our addresses to God are managed by thoughts alone, there we are more easily disturbed, words bound the thoughts and the inconvenience of an interruption is more sensible, as occasioning a pause in our speech; and as in mental Prayer, so when we joyn with others, to keepe time and pace with the words, unless the Lord quicken them to an extraordinary liveliness, we find it very hard, but how great a sin this is, is my first task to shew. I shall do it,

1. By three general considerations.

2. By speaking particularly to the present case.

First, Generally.

1. Consider how tender God is of his Worship, *Lev. 10.3.* He hath said, *That he will be sanctified in all that draw nigh unto him.* To sanctifie is to set apart from common use. Now God will be sanctified, that is, not treated with as an ordinary person, but with special heedfulness of soul and affection becoming so great a Majesty; when you think to put him off with any thing, you lessen his excellency and greatness, and do not sanctifie him, or glorifie him as God, and therefore God pleadeth his Majesty when they would put a sorry Sacrifice upon him, as if every thing were good enough for him. *Mal. 1.14.* *Cursed be the deceiver which bath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts.* To be slight in his service argueth mean thoughts of God, *Eccles. 5.2.* *Be not rash with thy mouth, nor hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in Heaven,*

and

and shew upon earth. We forget our distance, and by a bold prophaneſſe are too fellow-like and familiar with God, when we are not deeply ſerious and exact in what we do and ſay in his preſence, but only babble over a few impertinent words without attention and affection; Certainly, God is very ſenſible of the wrong and contempt we put upon him, for he noteth all, *Heb. 4. 13. All things are naked and open to him with whom we have to do.* And he will not put it up, for he telleth us, *Exod. 20. 8. That he will not hold them guiltleſſe that take his name in vain;* and he will be as good as his word: For the leaſt diſorders in Worſhip have been ſorely puniſhed, witneſſe the ſtroke from Heaven upon *Aarons Sons, Lev. 10. 2.* The breach made upon *Uzzah, 2 Sam. 6. 6.* And the havock made of the *Bethſhemites, 1 Sam. 6. 19.* The diſeaſes that rag'd at *Corinth, 1 Cor. 11. 30.* And though judgments be not ſo riſe and viſible now upon our unhallow'd approaches to God, yet he ſmiteth us with deadneſſe where he doth not ſmite us with death, for a man is puniſhed otherwiſe than a boy, and judgments are now ſpiritual which in the Infancy of the Church were temporal and bodily. Certainly, we have all cauſe to tremble when we come before the Lord.

2. *The more ſincere any one is, the more he maketh conſcience of his thoughts,* is more obſervant of them, and more troubled about them, *Iſa. 55. 7. Let the unrighteous man forſake his thoughts,* then he beginneth to be ſerious, and to have a conſcience indeed when his thoughts trouble him. So *David, Pf. 119. 113. I hate vain thoughts but thy Law do I love.* We think thoughts are free and ſubject to no tribunal, if there be any error in them, we think it is a very venial one, they betray us to no ſhame in the world, and therefore we let them go without diſlike & remorse: But a child of God cannot paſs over the matter ſo, he knoweth that thoughts are the immediate births of the ſoul, & do much diſcover the temper of it; that there Actions begin, and if *vain thoughts* be ſuffered to lodge in him, he will ſoon fall into further miſchief, and therefore he conſidereth what he *thinketh,* as well as what he *ſpeaketh and doth;* and if at all times, eſpecially in Worſhip, where the workings of the inward man are of chief regard, and the acts of the outward only required, as a help to our ſerving God in the Spirit, *Phil. 3. 3.*

3. *Careleſſneſſe in Duties is the high way to Atheiſm,* For every forme and ſlight Prayer doth harden the heart, and make way for contempt of God; Men, that have made bold with God in duty, and it ſucceeds well with them, their awe of God is leſſened, and the lively ſenſe of his Glory and Majeſty abated, till it be quite loſt; by degrees they outgrow all feelings and tenderneſſe of conſcience, every time you come to

God

God slightly: you lose ground by coming, till at length you look upon Worship as a meer Custom, or something done for fashions sake.

Secondly, *Particularly*. 1. It is an affront to God, and a kind of mockery; we wrong his *Omniscience*, as if he saw not the heart, and could not tell man his thought. It is Gods Essential glory in Worship to be acknowledged an *all-seeing Spirit*, and accordingly to be worshipped in *spirit and in truth*, *Joh. 4. 24*. Thoughts are as audible with him as words, therefore when you *prattle words*, & do not make conscience of *thoughts* you do not worship him as a *spirit*. We wrong his Majesty when we speak to him in Prayer and do not give heed to what we say; surely we are not to prattle like *Jays*, or *Parrots*, words without affection and feeling, or to chatter like *Cranes*; or be like *Ephraim* whom the Prophet calls a *filly Dove without an heart*. A mean man taketh it ill when you have business to talk with him about, and your minds are elsewhere; you would all judge it to be an affront to the Majesty of God if a man should send his *cloaths stuffed with straw*, or a *Puppet* dressed up instead of himself into the Assemblies of Gods people, and think this should supply his personal presence, yet our cloaths stuffed with straw, or an Image dressed up instead of us, such * *Michol* put into *Dauids* bed, would be less offensive to God than our bodies without our Souls; the absence of the spirit is the absence of the more noble part: We pretend to speak to God, and do not hear our selves, nor can give any account of what we pray for; or rather let me give you *Chrysostoms* Comparison, A man would have been thought to have profaned the mysteries of the *Levitical worship*, if instead of * *sweet incense* he should put into the Censer *Sulphur* or *Brimstone*, or mingle the one with the other. Surely our Prayers should be set forth as *Incense*, *Psa. 141. 2*. And do not we affront God to his face, that mingle so many vain, sinful, proud, filthy, blasphemous thoughts? What is this but to mingle *Sulphur* with our *incense*? Again, when God speaketh to us, and knocks at the heart, and there is none within to hear him, is it not an affront to his Majesty? Put it in a temporal Case: if a great person should ask to us, and we should neglect him, and entertain our selves with his servants, he would take it as a despoil and contempt done to him. The Great God of heaven and earth doth often call you together to speak to you; Now if you think so slightly of his speeches as not to attend, but set your minds a drift to be carried hither and thither with every wave, where is that reverence you owe to him?

It is a wrong to his goodness, and the comforts of his holy presence, for in effect you say that you do not find that sweetness in God which you expect,

* 1 Sam. 19.
12, 13.

* *Chrys.* Hom.
74. in Mat.

expect, and therefore are weary of his company before your business be over with him, it is said of the *Israelites* when they were going for *Canaan*, that in their hearts they turned back again into *Egypt*, *Acts 7.39*. They had more mind to be in *Egypt* than under *Moses* Government, and their thoughts ever ran upon the flesh pots and belly-cheer they enjoyed there, we are offended with their impatience and murmurings, and the affronts they put upon their Guides, and do not we even the same and worse in our careless manner of worshiping? When God hath brought us into his presence we do in effect say, *give us the world again*, this is better entertainment for our thoughts than God and holy things, if Christians would but interpret their actions, they would be ashamed of them, is any thing more worthy to be thought of than God? The *Israelites* hearts were upon *Egypt* in the wilderness, and our hearts are upon the World, nay, every toy, even when we are at the throne of grace, and conversing with him who is the Center of our rest, and the fountain of our blessedness.

2. It grieveth the Spirit of God, he is grieved with our vain thoughts as well as our scandalous actions; other sins may shame us more, but these are a grief to the Spirit, because they are conceived in the heart, which is his presence Chamber, and place of special residence, and he is most grieved with these vain thoughts which haunt us in the time of our special addresses to God, because his peculiar operations are hindered, and the heart is set open to Gods adversary in Gods presence, and the World and Satan are suffered to interpose in the very time of the reign of grace, then when it should be *in solio*, in its royalty, commanding all our faculties to serve it; this is to steal away the Soul from under Christs own arm, as a Captain of a Garrison is troubled whom the enemies come to prey under the very walls, in the face of all his forces and strength: So certainly it is a grief to the spirit when our lusts have power to disturb us in holy duties, and the heart is taken up with unclean glances, and worldly thoughts, then when we present ourselves before the Lord, God looks upon his peoples sins as aggravated because committed in his own house, *Jer. 23.12*. *In my house I have found their wickedness*; What is this but to dare God to his very face? *Solomon* saith, * *A King sitting upon his throne scattereth away evil with his eyes*. They are bold men that dare break the Laws when a Magistrate is upon the Throne, and actually exercising judgment against offenders; so it argueth much impudence, that when we come to deal with God, as sitting upon the Throne, and observing & looking upon us, that we can yet lend our hearts to our lusts, and suffer every vain thought to divert us: There is more of modesty, though

* *Prov. 20. 2.*

* Gen. 12. 5.

though little of sincerity in them that say to their lusts as *Abraham* to his Servants, *Tarry here while I go yonder and worship*, or as they say, the Serpent layeth aside her poison when she goeth to drink: When a man goeth to God he should leave his lusts behind him, not for a while and with an intent to entertain them again, but for ever: However this argueth some reverence of God, and sense of the weight of holy duties, but when we bring them along with us, it is a sign we little mind the work we go about.

3. It is a spiritual disease, the soul hath its diseases as well as the body; the unsteady roaving of the mind, or the disturbance of vain and impertinent thoughts is one of those diseases. Shall I call it a spiritual madness, or seaver, or shaking palse, or all these? You know mad men make several relations, and rove from one thing to another, and are gone off from a Sentence ere they have well begun it, our thoughts are as slipperly and inconsistent as their speeches, therefore what is this but the frenzy of the soul? What mad Creatures would we seem to be if all our thoughts were patent, or an invisible notary were lurking in our hearts to write them down? We run from Object to Object in a moment, and one thought looks like a meer stranger upon another, we wander and run thorough all the World in an instant; Oh, who can count the numberless operations and workings of our mind in one duty! what impertinent Excursions have we from things good to lawful, from lawful to sinful, from ordinarily sinful to down-right blasphemous, Should any one of us, after he hath been some time exercised in duty, go aside and write down his thoughts, and the many interlinings of his own prayers, he would stand amazed at the madness and light discurrency of his own Imaginations.

Or shall I call it the seaverish distemper of them soul? *Agris somnia* is a Proverb, in seavers men have a thousand fancies and swimming toys in their dreams, and just so it is with our souls in Gods Worship: We bring that curse upon us spiritually which corporally God threatned to bring upon the Jews, *I will scatter you to the end of the earth*. We scatter our thoughts hither and thither without any consistency, the heart in regard of this roving madness is like a runnagate Servant, who when he hath left his Master, wandreth up and down, and knoweth not where to fix; or like those that are full of distracting business, that cannot make a set meal, but take their diet by snatches.

4. It argueth the loss and non-acceptance of our Prayers, you are in danger to lose your Wo ship, at least so much of it as you do not attend upon; and truly to a man that knows the value of that kind of traffick,

this

this is a very great loss: You that are Tradesmen are troubled if you happen to be abroad when a good Customer cometh to deal with you: the Ordinances of God are the Market for your souls; if you had not been abroad, with *Esau*, you might have received the blessing, and gone away richly laden from a Prayer, from the Word, and the Lords Supper, but you lose your advantages for want of attention. Allowed distractions turn your prayers into sin, and make them no Prayers, when the soul departeth from the body, it is no longer a Man but a Carcase: So when the thoughts are gone from Prayer, it is no longer a Prayer, the Essence of the duty is wanting. What is Prayer? *Augustine* *de civ. deus*, as *Damasce* defined it, *The lifting up of the heart to God*; Many have prayed without words, but never any prayed without lifting up, or pouring out the heart. If a man should kneel, and use a gesture of Worship and fall asleep, no doubt that man doth not pray: This is to sleep with the heart, and the words uttered are but like a dream, have but a sleight touch of reason in them, a meer drowsie unattentive devotion, the soul is asleep though the eyes be not closed, and the senses locked up. Can we expect that God should hear us and bless us because of our meer outward presence? We are ashamed of those that sleep at a duty, and this is as bad or worse, they may sleep out of natural infirmity, as weakness, age, sickness, &c. But this doth more directly proceed from some slightness or irreverence: Well then, with what face can we expect the fruit of that Prayer to which we have not attended? It is a great presumption to desire God to hear those requests, a great part whereof we have not heard our selves; if they be not worthy of our attention, they are far more unworthy of Gods. *x Cyprian* or *Ruffinus*, *x Cyp. de Orat. Dom'n.* or whoever was the Author of the Explication of the Lords Prayer in *Cyprians* Works, hath a notable passage to this purpose, *Quo modo te à Deo exaudiri postulas, cum te ipse non audias? Vis Deum esse memorem tui cum rogas, cum ipse tui memor non sit?* Thou art unmindful of thy self, thou dost not hear thy self, and how canst thou with reason desire the blessing and comfort of the duty which thou thoughtest not worthy thine own attention and regard.

I would not willingly grate too hard upon a tender conscience, it is a question that is often propounded, whether wandring thoughts do altogether frustrate a duty, and make it of none effect? And whether in some case a vertual attention doth not suffice? There is an actual intention, & a vertual intention; The actual intention is when a soul doth distinctly & constantly regard every thing that is said and done in a duty. And a vertual intention is, when we keep only a disposition and purpose to attend,

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though many times we fail and are carried aside, this *Aquinas* calleth *primam intentionem*, out of the Scripture we may call it, the setting of the heart to seek the Lord, 1 Chron. 22. 19. Now, what shall we say in this Case? On the one side, we must not be too strict lest we prejudice the comfort and expectation of Gods people, when did they ever manage a duty but they are guilty of some wandrings? It is much to keep up our hearts to the main and solid requests that are made to God in Prayer. But on the other side, we must not be too remiss lest we encourage indiligence and careless devotion: Briefly then, by way of answer, there is a threefold distraction in Prayer, *distractio invita, negligens, & voluntaria*.

1. There is *distractio invita*, an unwilling distraction, when the heart is seriously and solemnly set to seek God, and yet we are carried besides our purpose; for it is impossible so to shut doors and windows but that some wind will get in; So to guard the heart as to be wholly free from vain thoughts, but they are not constant, frequent, allowed, but resisted, prayed against, striven against, bewailed, and then they are not iniquities, but infirmities, which the Lord will pardon, he will gather up the broken parts of our Prayers, and in mercy give us an answer; I say, where this distraction is retracted with grief, resisted with care, as *Abraham drove away the fowls* when they came to pitch upon his Sacrifice, Gen. 15. 11. It is to be reckoned among the infirmities of the Saints, which do not hinder their Consolation.

2. There is *distractio negligens*, a negligent distraction. When a man hath an intention to pray, and expresses his desires to God, but he prays carelessly, and doth not guard his thoughts, so that sometimes he wanders, and sometime recovers himself again, and then strays again, and is in and out, off and on with God: as a *Spaniel* rovethe up and down, and is still crossing the ways, sometimes losing the company he goes with, and then retiring to them again. I cannot say, this man prayeth not at all, or that God doth not hear him, but he will have little comfort in his Prayers; yea, if he be serious they will minister more matter of grief to him then comfort; and therefore he ought to be more earnest and sedulous in resisting this infirmity, that he may be assured of audience: Otherwise, if this heart be not affected with it in time, by degrees, all those motions and dispositions of heart that are necessary to prayer will be eaten out and lost.

3. There is *distractio voluntaria*, a voluntary distraction; when men mind no more then the task or work wrought, and only go round in a track of accustomed duties, without considering with what heart they perform

perform them, this is such a *vanity of mind* as turneth the whole prayer into *sin*.

Secondly, The causes of this roving and impertinent intrusion of vain thoughts.

1. *Sathan* is one cause, who doth *Maxime insidiari orationibus* (as *Cassian* speaketh) lye in wait to hinder the Prayers of the Saints, when ever we minister before the Lord, he is at our right hand ready to resist us, *Zech. 3. 1.* And therefore the Apostle *James*, when he biddeth us draw nigh to God, biddeth us also to resist the devil, *Jam. 4. 7. 8.* Implying thereby, That there is no drawing nigh to God without resisting *Sathan*. When a Tale is told, and you are going about the Affairs of the World, he doth not trouble you; for these things do not trouble him, or do any prejudice to his Kingdom: But when you are going to God, and that in a warm, lively affectionate manner, he will be sure to disturb you, seeking to abate the edge of your affections or divert your minds; Formal Prayers pattered over do him no harm, but when you seriously set your selves to call upon God, he saith within himself, This man will pray for Gods Glory, and then I am at a loss; for the coming of Christs Kingdom, and then mine goeth to wrack; That Gods Will may be done upon earth as it is in heaven, and that minds me of my old fall, and my business is to cross the Will of God; he will pray for dayly bread, and that strengtheneth dependance for Pardon and Comfort, and then I lose ground, for the devils are the Rulers of the darkness of this World; He will pray to be kept from sin and temptation, and that is against me. Thus *Sathan* is afraid of the prayers of the Saints, he is concerned in every request you make to God, and therefore he will hinder or cheat you of your Prayers; if you will needs be praying, he will carry away your hearts. Now, much he can do if you be not watchful, he can present Objects to the senses which stir up thoughts, yea, pursue his temptations, and cast in one fiery dart after another, therefore we had need stand upon our guard.

* Eph. 6. 12.

2. The natural levity of our Spirits, man is a restless creature we have much a do to stay our hearts for any space of time in one state, much more in holy things, from which we are naturally averse, *Rom. 7. 21.* when I would do good evil is present with me to draw me captive. Oh consider this natural feebleness of mind, whereby we are unable to keep long to any employment, but are like fether tossed up and down like a dried leaf before the wind, or as an empty vessel upon the waves, 'tis so with us in most businesses, especially in those which are Sacred, the

Apostle biddeth us *pray without ceasing* and we cannot do it whilst we pray, he is a stranger to God and his own heart, who finds it not daily, this is an incurable vanity, though we often repent of, yet 'tis not amended, a misery that God would leave upon our natures, to humble us while we are in the World, and that we may long for Heaven: the Angels and blessed Spirits there are not troubled with those things, in Heaven there is no complaining of wandering thoughts, there God *is all in all* they that are there have but one Object to fill their understandings, one Object to give contentment to their desires, their hearts cleave to God inseparably by a perfect love, but here we are cumbered with much serving, and much work begets a multitude of thoughts in us, *Psalm 94. 11. The Lord knows the thoughts of men that they are but vanity.* When we have summed up all the traverses, reasonings, and discourses of the mind, we may write at the bottom this, as the total sum, *here is nothing but vanity.*

3. Another cause is *practical Atheism*, we have little sense of things that are *unseen* and lie *within the veil*, in the *World of Spirits*; things that are *seen* have a great force upon us, offer it now to the *Governour*, saith the Prophet, *Mal. 1.8.* God is a far off, both from our sight and apprehension, senses blind attention: If you speak to a man your thoughts are settled, and you think of nothing else, but in speaking to God you have not like attention because you see him not, *Exod. 32.1. Make us gods to go before us.* Aye that we would have a *visible God*, whom we may see and hear, but the true God being a *Spirit*, and an *invisible Power*, all the service that we do him, is a task performed more out of custom than affection, in a slight perfunctory way.

4. *Strong and unmortified lusts*, which being rooted in us, and having the Soul at most command will trouble us, and distract us when we go about any duty; each man hath a mind, and can spend it unweariedly as he is inclined, either to *Covetousness*, *Ambition* or *Sensuality*, for where the treasure is, there will the heart be, *Matth. 6.20.* set but the *Covetous* man about the *World*, the *Voluptuous* man about his *pleasures*, and the *Ambitious* man about his *honours* and *preferments*, and will they suffer their thoughts to be taken off? surely no, but set either of these about *holy things*, and presently these lusts will be interposing, *Ezek. 33.3.1. their heart goeth after their Covetousness*; the sins to which a man is most addicted, will *ingross the thoughts*, so that this is one sign by which a man may know his reigning sin, that which interrupts him most in holy duties, for when all other lusts are kept out, Satan will be sure to set the darling sin a work to plead for him, if a man be ad-

dicted

and thoughts speak lower in his ears than our words; therefore possess the heart with a dread of his glorious presence, and with the weight and importance of the work we are about, were we to deal with another man in a case of life and death, we would weigh our words, and not rove like mad men.

7. The Curiosity of the Senses these occasion a diversion, 'tis the Office of the fancy to present as in a Glass whatsoever is received by the External Senses, or offered by the memory, and so the understanding taketh notice of it, the wandering eye causeth a wandering heart, Solomon saith, *Prov. 17. 24. The fools eyes are to the ends of the earth*, first his eyes rove, and then his heart, the Apostle Peter saith, of unclean persons, that they have eyes full of adultery, *2 Pet. 2. 14. uxoris &c* Of the adulterers (as the word signifieth) the eye is rolled upon the object, and then the dart by the fancy is transmitted to the heart, Senses are the windows and doors of the Soul, keep the Senses if you would keep the heart; Job was at a severe appointment with his eyes, *Job. 31. 1. 'tis good when we go to God to renew these Covenants*, to agree with the heart that we will not go to God without it, with the eyes and ears, that we will not see and hear any thing but what concerns our work; 'twas a strange constancy & fixedness which * Josephus speaketh of, when *Fanias, Cornelius*, and *Furinus*, and *Fabius*, with their Troops had broken into the City of *Jerusalem*, and some fled one way and some another, yet the Priests went on with their Sacrifices, and the holy rites of the Temple, as if they heard nothing; though they rushed on them with their swords, yet they preferred the duty of their Religion, before their own safety; and strange is that other Instance of the *Spartan* Youth in *Plutarch*, that held the Censer to *Alexander* whilst he was sacrificing, and though a coal lighted upon his flesh, he suffered it to burn there, rather than by any crying out he would disturb the rites of their Heathenish Superstition: certainly these instances should shame us Christians, that do not hold the Senses under a more severe restraint, but upon every light occasion suffer them to trouble and distract us in worship.

8. *Carking and distrustful Cares*, when we are torn in pieces with the cares of the World, we cannot have a composed heart, but our minds will waver, and our dangers will recur to our thoughts, and hinder the exercise of our faith, God took special care of the *Jews*, when they went up to worship, that they might have nothing to trouble them, and therefore he saith, *Exod. 34. 24. none of the nations shall desire the Land when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year*; and * *Augustine* gives the reason of it, lest they should be distracted with

* Josephus de
Bellis Judeo-
rum.

* Augustinus
quest. 163. in
Exod.

with thoughts about their own preservation, *vult Deus intelligi ut se-
curus quisq; ascenderet, nec de terrâ suâ sollicitus esset, Deus promi-
tente custodiam;* and one of the arguments by which *Paul* commendeth
single life, is freedom from the incumbrances of the World, *that we may
serve the Lord without distraction,* 1 Cor. 7. 35.

Thirdly, *Remedies*, I might speak many things by way of meer coun-
sel about guarding the Senses, the use and abuse of a form, &c. but all
these are but like external applications in Physick or topical medicines,
as the binding of things to the wrists of the hands, &c. which work no
perfect cure of a disease, unless the distemper be purged away, therefore
I shall speak to those things that are most effectual.

1. *Go to God and wait for the power of his Grace,* *David* speaking of
it as his work, *Psal.* 86. 11. *Unite my heart to the fear of thy name,* fix it,
gather it together *unum ratiocinans me* (saith the *Septuagint*) make it
one, the heart is multiplied when 'tis distracted by several thoughts, God
hath our hearts in his own hand, & when he can keep them up no longer
then he holds them up, when he withdraws his grace we lose our life, and
seriousness; as *Meteors* hang in the air as long as the heat of the Sun is
great, but when the Sun is gone down, they fall; as long as the love of
God and the work of his grace is powerful in us, we are kept in a lively
heavenly frame, but as that abateth, the Soul swerveth and returneth
to vanity and sin. We read, *Acts* 16. 14, 15. that the Lord opened
the heart of *Lydia*, so that she attended to the things that were spoken of
Paul: attention there beareth somewhat a larger sense than we now
consider it in, namely a deep regard to the doctrine of life, yet this Sense
of fixedness of spirit cannot be excluded, go to God then, pray him to
keep thy heart together, he that hath set bounds to the Sea, and can
bind up the waves in a heap, and stop the Sun in its flight, certainly he
can fasten and establish thy heart and keep it from running out.

2. *Meditate on the greatness of him before whom we are;* 'tis of great
consequence in duties, to consider whom we take to be our party, with
whom we have to do, *Heb.* 4. 13 in the Word God is the party that speak-
eth to us, *thou shalt be as my mouth,* *Jer.* 15. 16. *as if God spake by me,*
2 Cor. 5. 20. 'tis God speaketh, and the heathen King of *Moab* shew-
ed such reverence, that when *Ehud* said, *I have a message to thee from*
God, he arose out of his seat, *Judg.* 3. 20. so in Prayer you have to do
with God, you do as really minister before him as the Angels that abide
in his presence, Oh, if you could see him that is invisible, you would have
more reverence. * A man that is praying or worshiping should behave
himself as if he were in Heaven immediately before God, in the midst
of

* *Omnino nos
oportet oratio-
nis tempore cu-
riam intrare
caelestis m.*

*Illam, utique
curiam in qua
rex regum sedet
in stellato solio
circumdante
eum innumera-
bili & ineffa-
bili beatorum
spirituum ex-
ercitu, ubi &
ipse qui videtur,
quia maiorem
numerus non
inveniunt, millia*

aut millium ministrabant ei, & decies centena millium assistebant ei, quanta ergo cum reverentia, quanto timore, quanta illuc humilitate accedenda debet & palade sua procedens & repens rannacula visus, quam tremebundus, quam supplex, quam denique humilis & sollicitus, & toto intentus anima maiestati gloriae in praesentia Angelorum, in consilio iustorum & congregatione assistere poterit vilis homuncio. Bernardus de quatuor modis orandi.

of all the blessed Angels, those ten thousand times ten thousand that stand before God; Ubi with what reverence, with what fear should a poor worm creep into his presence; think then of that glorious all-seeing God, with whom thou canst converse in thoughts, as freely as with men in words; he knoweth all that is in thy heart, and seeth thee thorough and thorough; if you had spoken all those things you have thoughts upon, you would be odious to men; if all your blasphemy, uncleanness, worldly projects, were known to those that joyn with us, should we be able to hold up our heads for blushing? and doth not the Lord see all this? could we believe his inspection of the heart, there would be a greater awe upon us.

3. Mortifie those lusts that are apt to withdraw our minds, he that indulgeth any one vile affection will never be able to pray aright, every duty will give you experience what corruption to resist, what thoughts are we haunted and pestered with when we come to God? God requireth Prayer that we may be weary of our lusts, and that the trouble that we find from them in holy exercises, may exasperate our Souls against them; we are angry with an importunate beggar that will not be satisfied with any reasonable terms, but is always obtruding upon us, every experience in this kind should give us an advantage to free our hearts from this disturbance; the whole work of grace tendeth to prayer, and the great Exercise and Employment of the Spiritual life is; *watching and Prayer*, Ephes. 6. 18. and that Prayer be not interrupted, 1 Pet. 3. 2.

4. Before the duty there must be an actual preparation or a solemn discharge of all impediments, that we may not bring the World along with us; put off thy shoes off thy feet, saith God to Moses, for the place wherein thou standest is holy ground, surely we should put off our carnal distractions when we go about holy duties. Gird up the loins of your mind, saith the Apostle Peter, 1 Pet. 1. 13. an allusion to long garments worn in that Country. 'tis dangerous to come to prayer with a loose heart. My heart is fixed (saith David) O God my heart is fixed, Psal. 57. 7. that is, fitted, prepared, bended to Gods Worship, the Soul must be set, put into a dexterous ready posture. *Claudatur contra adversarium patrum, & soli Deo pareat, ne ad se ipsum Dei accedere tempore orationis patiatur.*

Psalm. Cyp. lib. De Oratione Domini. There must be a resolved shutting of the heart against Gods enemy, lest he insinuate within, and with draw our minds.

5. Be severe to your purpose, and see that you regard nothing but what the duty leadeth you unto. 'tis the Devils policy to cheat us of the present duty by an unreasonable interposition. Satan beginneth with us in good things, that he may draw us to worse, what is unreasonable is naught, watch against the first diversion how plausible soever, 'tis an intruding thought that breaketh a rank; in this case say as the Spouse, Cant. 3. I charge you that you awake not my Beloved till he please, if a rigid severity should you use against the starting of the heart, if Satan should at first cast in a thought of blasphemy, that would make thee quake and shake, therefore he beginneth with plausible thoughts, but be careful to observe the first stragglings, yea be not diverted by thy very strivings against diversions, and therefore do not dispute with suggestions but despise them: nor stand examining temptations but reject them, as blind *Bartimew* regarded not the rebukes of the People, but cryed the more after Christ, or as Travellers do not stand beating back the Dogs that bark at them, but hold on their course, this is to be religiously obstinate and severe to our purpose, Satan condemned him that left advantage against you, when he is writing Images upon the sand, do not vouchsafe to look upon them: A Crier in the Court that is often commanding silence, disturbeth the Court more than they that make the noise; So disputing with our distractions increaseth them, they are better avoided by a severe contempt.

6. Bring with you to every holy Service strong spiritual affections, our thoughts would not be at such a distance from our work if our affections were more ready and more earnestly set, it is the unwilling Servant that is loath to stay long at his work, but is soon gone; could we bring our selves more delightfully to converse with God, our hearts would hold our minds close, and we would not straggle so often as we do, therefore see you do this, or you do nothing. (I was glad (saith David) when they said unto me, come let us go into the house of the Lord, Ps. 122. 1. Were we of this frame of spirit many directions would not need: Now what should hinder us from being thus affected? Are not the Ordinances of God the special means of our communion with him? And the throne of grace, the very porch of Heaven? Can we be better than in Gods Company, pleading with him for our souls good, and waiting for his blessing? Therefore let us be glad and rejoyce in his presence, and you will not easily find such out strayings of mind and thought.

a Sicut sub-
limi homine non
dicam pro vita,
& salute nostra,
sed etiam pro
alicujus lucrī
commodo suppli-
camus totam in-
tentionem mentis,
& corporis actionem
deficientem, de-
natu ejus trepi-
da expectatione
pendemus non
modico ser-
mone, ne
quid forte in-
veniamus inco-
gnitum, vel in-
usitatum.
audiamus, et
ad id quod
magis summi-
us occultum, om-
nium creaturā
inimicā
perpetuā, non
periculū suppli-
camus. Cal-
han Col. 2. 2.
b. Hanc omnia
nonnulli qui
sunt exaltati
in iustitia
habeant, et
pescata per
aliam vide-
antur, scientes
tamen perfectio-
nis bonum etiam
minimorum re-
rum multitudo
gravissima est.
Cassian Col. 13.
cap. 7.
c. Hooker on
Act 2. 37.

Remember the weight and consequence of the duties of Religion; that is a cure for lightness. you are dealing with God in a Case of life and death, and will you not be serious? With what diligence and earnestness doth an Advocate plead with a man in a Case wherein he himself is not concerned, either for the life of another, or the inheritance or goods of another, and will not then plead earnestly with God, when thy soul is in danger, when it is a Case of Eternal life and death, as all that ers that pass between God and man? Certainly, if we did consider the weight of the business, the heart would be freed from this garrish wantonness; if Christ had taken thee aside into the Garden, as he took Peter, James and John, and thou hadst seen him moaning and trembling under his Agonies, thou wouldst have seen that it is no light matter to go to God in a case of the salvation of souls, though thou hast never so much assurance of thy grace, for so Christ had the frequent instance of Christian griefs maketh us to forget the consequence of them. In bearing the word be serious, it is your life, Deut. 32. 46. Harken unto the words of the Law, for this is not a vain thing, because it is your life; thy con-
fessing of sin is upon it, and the things that are spoken concern your souls, every act of communion with God is very participation of his grace, hath an influence upon Eternity, say therefore of Jeremiah in such a case, Jerem. 17. 1. I am doing a great work, I cannot slay down. Can you have an heart so much other things when you are about so great a work as the saving of your souls?

8. Let every experimental wandering make you more humble and careful. If men did lay their wanderings to heart, and retract them, even every glance with the eye, the mind would not so readily, so constantly, and so audaciously, all actions displeasing are not done so readily, therefore it is good to bewail these distractions, do not count them as light things. b Cassian speaking of these wandering thoughts, saith, The most that come to worship, being involved in greater sin, scarce count distractions of thoughts as evil, and so the mischief is increased upon them. It is a sad thing to be given up to a wandering mind, and such a frailty, so weak, as cannot be fixed, therefore if we do seriously humble our selves for these offences, and they did once become our habit, they would not be our practices. One saith, that Blazes men observe of some dogs, that if a fresh game come in view, they leave their old sport, but if suddenly beaten off from it, they kindly take to their first sport; the application is easy, did we not so heartily love for this vanity, and pray against the sin of our prayers with distraction; this evil would not be so familiar with us.

9. A constant heavenliness; and holiness of heart; if men were as they should be, holy, *as was our Saviour* 1 Pet. 1. 14. In all manner of conversation; in solemn duties, good and proper thoughts would be more natural and kindly to us; they that live in a constant communion with God, do not find it such a tedious business to converse with him, if they have any excursion of thoughts it is in their daily work, and the offices of the common life, which they are ever seasoning with some gracious meditations and short ejaculations; When they are in duty they are where they would be; constant gravity and seriousness is a great help to them; Men allow themselves a lawless liberty in their ordinary conversations, and then in Prayer they know not how to gather up their hearts; such as men are out of Prayer, such they will be in Prayer; We cannot expect that pangs of devotion should come upon us all of a sudden, and that when we come reaking from the world, we should presently leap into a heavenly frame.

10. The next remedy is frequent solemn meditation; If the understanding were oftner taken up with the things of God, and our thoughts were kept in more frequent exercise they would the better come to hand. There is a double advantage comes to us by meditation.

1. The soul gets more abundance of heart-warming knowledge, and therefore will not be so barren and dry, which certainly is a cause of wandering, Psal. 45. 1. *My heart inditeth a good matter, and then my song as is as the pen of a ready Writer*; A man that boyleth and concocts truths in his heart hath a greater readines of words and affections. There is a good treasure within him, Mat. 12. 35. out of which he may bring forth. * One expresseth it thus: He that hath store of gold and silver in his pocket, and but a few Brass farthings, will more readily upon every draught come out with gold and silver than brass farthings: So he that hath stocked his heart with holy thoughts will not find carnal musings so rise and frequent.

* Cobbet of Prayer.

2. By use a man gets a greater command over himself. When we constantly leave the thoughts at random, & never lay restraints upon them, it is in vain to think we shall keep them in order when we please, fierce Creatures are tame to those that use to command them; every Art is difficult at first, as Writing, Singing, Playing upon an Instrument, but we get a facility by use and exercise: Yea, not only a facility, but a delight in them, and those things that at first we thought impossible, by a little practice grow easie; Certainly, *the way of the Lord is strength to the upright*, and the more we set our selves to any good thing, the more readily and prepared are we for it.

* Prov. 11. 39.



How must we in all things give Thanks?

1 Thess. 5: 18.

In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you.



HE more comprehensive any mercy or duty is, the greater they are.

There are three duties here together, which the Apostle exhorts to; all which have a kind of *Universality* annexed to them, of which my Text contains one.

1. *Rejoycing*: We must rejoyce evermore, for even holy mourning hath the seed of joy in it, which the soul finds by that time it's over, if not in it.

2. *Prayer*: Pray without ceasing; We must be ever, at least, in a holy disposition to this duty, when we do it not actually. "Prayer is the wall that compasses the City, there must be no gap in it. "It is as the Sun in the Firmament, it must always keep its round.

3. *Thanksgiving*: *In every thing give thanks, &c.* Observe in the words these two parts:

1. A Duty enjoyed.

2. A Reason annexed.

I. In the Duty note four things.

1. The matter of it, *thanksgiving*.

2. The object of it, implied, *God*.

3. The performers of it, *Believers*, for so them he writes, 1 Thess. 1. 1, 2, 3.

4. The

Psal. 136. 6.

Psal. 97. 21.

Though not in the heretical sense of Eucharistes and Messallians.

Chrys. Orat. 2. de orand Deum.

4. The extent of it in every thing.

II. In the Reason we have three things,

1. The ground of the duty, it is the will of God, the revealed will of God, the rule of all obedience.

2. The manner of declaring Gods will to us in this behalf, it is the will of God in Christ Jesus; it is a Gospel duty, Christ Jesus was the Prophet and Messenger of it, it's futable to the mind of Christ, it's accepted of God in Christ and for Christ. Lastly, Christ himself was a pattern of it, this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.

3. The specially application, This is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Mr. Calvin doth excellently shew the sweet harmony between these three duties, how one helps the other, but I cannot insist on that.

The lesson then which the holy Ghost would have us learn in the Text, is thus sum'd up.

It is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning Christians, that in every thing they give thanks, that they be thankful, as our word is more proper to our purpose.

For though we have nothing of our own that good is to give God but thanks, yet neither do we properly give him that, seeing both our giving and the right manner of doing it, even in thanksgiving is of the Lord.

Our continual praying shews that we are always beggars, and our continual thanksgiving shews us always debtors. Our thanks then indeed is the rebound of mercy heavenward whence it came, and a holy reflexion of the warm sun-beams of Gods benefits shining on us.

That which I principally aim at in the pursuance and pressing of this Truth, is, not only to speak somewhat to it in the nature, necessity and excellency of it, but to the extent of it as a special Case, *How Christians may be said to give thanks in every thing, and why?*

1. Who are properly concerned in this duty?

2. Why, and upon what grounds are Christians bound to give thanks in every thing?

3. How, and in what manner are Christians to give thanks in every thing?

4. How in afflictions, and why?

5. How shall we bring our hearts to give thanks to God in every thing?

Who are, or ought to be thankful?

The Lord hath a return and tribute of praise due to him from all Creatures.

It is pleasing and acceptable unto God, *Beza in locum.*

Vel ista per anachrophoram dicta sunt. Id. ibidem.

Illud autem videri referendum non ad gratiarum tantum actionem, sed & ad preces. Grot. Annot. in locum. Comment. in 1 Ep. ad Th. Doctr.

1 Cor. 4. 7.
1 Chro. 29. 14.
Philip. 2. 13.

Quere.

Quere. 1. Ans.

the payment of it; and for as much as we are bound always to be thankfull, it doth acknowledge we are always beholden to God, and always insolvent.

Now a child of God is bound to be thankfull to God above all men, because,

1. He is more competent } than any other,
2. He is more concerned }

1. More competent, by acts of reason and grace too. All that the Scripture speaks as to the duty of thankfulness, may be referred to these Heads:

1. To know and acknowledge the Lords mercies.
2. To remember them, i. e. to record and commemorate them.
3. To value and admire them,

To blaze and proclaim them.

In all which a gracious soul is much more competent than a meer natural man, though indued with quick understanding, strong memory, and great eloquence.

For the Spirit of God hath inlightened his soul, and taught him this lesson; he is principled for it, he is a well-tuned instrument; his heart boileth with good matter, and his tongue is as the pen of a ready writer, Psal. 45. 12 as David speaks on this occasion, when he spake of the praises of the King in his Song of Loves.

This Spirit of God in a thankfull soul, is as the breath of the Organ, without which the pipes make no sound; yea, as the breath of the Trumpeter by which the Trumpet gives a certain and melodious sound.

This is it that makes that noble Evangelical spirit, yea, that heavenly Angelical Spirit in Christians: See a place for it, *Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the spirit, speaking to your selves in Psalms and Hymns, &c. giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ:* showing that what wine doth in Poets and good fellows, it makes them sing and roar our Catcher, by which they make Musick to the Devil; so the Spirit of God in Saints is the principle of all true thankfulness and holy joy towards God; and indeed there was a very gracious frame of spirit this way in Primitive Christians.

II. More concerned, as having received more than others; *to whomsoever much is given, of them much is required, a proportion of duty according to the degree of every portion of mercy; whether you consider what is given, or what is forgiven you.* Luk. 12. 48.

There are two things, which every gracious soul will acknowledge;

No

No man (saith he) in the world hath deserved less of God than I, and none hath received more of God than I, how much then am I concerned to be thankfull?

I have read of a holy man, that was leen once standing still with tears in his eyes, and looking up to heaven, and being asked by one that passed by, why he did so, said, I admire the Lords mercy to me that did not make me a Toad, that Vermine being then casually at his feet.

2 Sam. 9. 8.

The least common mercy affects a gracious soul, that knows his desert nothing but misery. *Alephiboseth* bowed himself and said, *What is thy servant that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am.* When David had told him he should have his Lands, and eat bread at his Table. When the Lord spares our lives, and gives us common mercies, we must admire and adore his goodness.

And this leads me to the second general Question,

Quere 2.

Why, and upon what grounds Christians are bound to give thanks in every thing?

Ans. 1.

It is the will of God in Christ Jesus,

The will of God in Christ Jesus is the clearest Rule, and the highest Obligation to any soul for the performance of any duty. O that men would now adays study more, act by and hold fast to this rule: And ask conscience in the performance of every duty, *is this the will of God in Christ Jesus?*

It was meet that this duty of thankfulness should be preste and practised under the Gospel, because it argues a spiritual and noble frame of Soul, the highest pitch of grace, which is a true Gospel frame.

David under the Old Testament had a new Testament beare in this particular; his Psalms, which were all penn'd upon emergent occasions, are all *Tehilla* and *Tephilla*, Prayer and Praise; his heart and Harp were so tuned to the Praises of God, to Psalms of Degrees, to *Hallelujahs*, that some have thought the Lord is praised with those Psalms in Heaven.

Zach. 12. 8.

Greg. Hom. 20.
in Ezek.

Yet is it promised under the Gospel, that *he that is feeble shall be as David*; which some understand as to Praise and Thanksgivings, upon the account of Gospel grace.

Luk. 1. 46, 68.

Luk. 2. 13, 14,

20, 29.

More punctually, *this is the will of God in Christ Jesus, i. e.* Jesus Christ shews us the duty of thankfulness both by pattern, & by Precept, for he was not only ushered into the World with songs of Thanksgiving by Angels, by *Zachary*, by *Mary*, by *Simon*, by the Shepherds, &c. but the Lord Jesus himself was a great Pattern and President of thankfulness all his life long, and in this also was a true Son of David: He thank-

thanked God frequently and fervently, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes,* when his Disciples preached and cast out Devils. Math. 11. 25.

Thus also when he raised *Lazarus*, *Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.* Joh. 11. 41.

When he was to eat common bread, he blessed it with giving of thanks. Much more, *consecrated bread.* Mark 8. 6.
Luk. 22. 19.

Thus was he a Pattern of thankfulness, he did *in every thing give thanks.*

In like manner we find him reproving the nine Lepers for their unthankfulness, which shews that he held out thankfulness as a duty, personally he gave a Pattern and precept for it. Luk. 17. 16, 17.

Now though this were enough to shew it, the will of God in Christ Jesus, yet these words reach further; namely, to shew that is the strain of the Gospel in the Apostles Doctrine and Practice, for they through their Commission, and the great measure of Gods spirit in them declared the will of God in Christ Jesus, *They worshipped, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.* Luk. 24. 52.

What the Apostle Paul's spirit was in this (by whom so much of the will of God in Christ Jesus is revealed and penned) I need not rehearse, for all his Epistles breath out the praises of Gods grace.

Thanks and Praise is the *homage* we owe to God for all we have and are, Therefore in every thing to be rendred. Reas. 2.

We live *precariously*, and at mercy; *by the grace of God we are what we are.* God in his sovereignty might have left us in the womb of no- Act. 17. 28.
1 Cor. 15. 10.

thing, and never made us; and have crushed us into nothing as soon as he made us, for *hath not the Potter power over his Clay?* Every moment we depend on him, and hold all from him, his power over us is Rom. 9.

arbitrary and infinite; to this Sovereign God we owe all, and therefore our thanks, *who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again, for of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.* Rom. 11. 35, 36

For not considering this *Belshazzar* Dan. 5. 25.

smarted, *The God in whose hands thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways hast thou not glorified.* The birds that lift up their bills, at every drop they take, may mind us of this duty. Common and constant mercies deserve special thanks, because constant.

3. Christians must give thanks in every thing, because they have *spiritual* mercies innumerable and invaluable superadded to comon

Ephes. 1. 3.

1 Pet. 1. 3, &c.

2 Cor. 1. 3.

Gratia gratia
 uata, & gratia
 gratum faciens,
 Bellarm.
 Val-mia, &c.

Ris. 63. 3.
 Meiosis.

Quere. 3.

Ans.

Beech. 5. 11.

Gal. 3. 10.

Rom. 6. 5.

mercies, special and spiritual mercies in Christ Jesus, Blessed be God who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ. Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, &c. Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, &c.

Papists distinguish grace into grace freely given, and grace that makes men grateful to God the giver of grace, this distinction is idle and untrue, for all grace as freely given obligeth us to be grateful, but yet special grace binds us to a more special gratitude, namely, sanctifying and saving grace.

The decreeing and sending of Jesus Christ to and for poor sinners, the opening a fountain of grace in and by him, the making and ratifying a Covenant of grace, whereof the Lord Jesus is the Angel and Mediator, The precious promises both absolute and conditional thereupon, with all other choice Gospel Privileges of grace and glory, as far as Gods almsufficiency, and the infinite merit, satisfaction, and righteousness of the Son of God can reach, this deserves a suitable proportion of thanks and blessing from us both here and in heaven. *Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.* i. e. I will render special and continual praise for this above all other things.

How, and in what manner Christians ate to give thanks in every thing.

The difficulty lies here as to the *Act* and the *Object* both, 1. That is, how a man can always have his heart and tongue exercised unto this duty.

2. If he could be supposed to do this, yet it seems that every thing is not a fit subject-matter of Thanksgiving: For a great part of our life being sin and misery, which is rather the ground of mourning than of thanksgiving, our thankfulness seems to be restrained to a narrower sphere than what the Text holds out.

First, Can a Child of God in any sense give thanks for sin? *Ans.* No, not properly: Because.

1. That which is the ground of *dejection* cannot be the ground of *thanksgiving*; but sin is a detestable thing.

2. That which produceth a *Curse*, cannot properly cause *blessing*; but sin is a cursed thing.

3. As we may not sin that grace may abound, nor do evil that good may come of it, so sin cannot be the ground of thanksgiving, being con-

contrary to the Honour, Image, and will of God.

4. Sin is none of Gods Creatures, therefore a Plague and not a benefit, therefore the subject of sorrow and shame, not of thanks.

Deus non est author, sed ultor peccati.

Nevertheless *improperly*, by *accident*, occasionally and consequentially (as men speak) sin is a ground of thanksgiving. How? That the Lord by his unlimited power can so master sin, and by his infinitely wise providence can so permit, dispose of, and bound sin, and by his free grace pardon sin. Yea make grace superabound, where sin did abound, fetching light out of darkness, and make great sinners become great Saints, and from all lay a foundation, and raise a revenue of infinite glory to himself, this is praise-worthy in God.

Now as *Pilate* and *Herod*, *Judas* and *Jews* are not to be praised for their treachery and cruelty against *Christ*, although they did, by all they did, *fulfil* & *execute* Gods Decrees in that behalf, so no man must thank sin, or God for sin, albeit God hath extracted *Treacle* out of this *Viper*.

Act. 4. 27, 28.

Wherefore when we read of a holy man that said, He was more beholding to his corruptions than to his gifts and graces, because the former made him humble, the latter made him proud. Or when we hear another cry out, *O felix culpa*, &c. Oh happy sin of our first Parents, happy Tree of Knowledge, that bore such fruit that brought forth such a Promise, such a Saviour, &c. I say, when we hear such *Rhetorical* strains as these from the Devout, Ancients or Moderns, we must understand them *warily*.

Yet when the Lord doth demonstrate the glory of his *Attributes* in *over-ruling* and *pardoning* sin, to the salvation of poor sinners, there is reason we should magnifie him to the height.

1. Because all the dishonour which God hath in the World is upon the account of sin.

2. Because we our selves having dishonoured him much that way, it is meet we adore and admire him the more in the power of his grace, that can fetch a *Pearl* out of this *dunghil*, and by such a *soil* set off his *glory*.

Let us then, as many as profess to be made partakers of this grace, speak good of the Lord for it, and give others occasion so to do, as the *Romans* did to *Paul*; God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin: but ye have obeyed from the heart the Form of *Doctrins* which was delivered you, i. e. That ye were once sinners and are now Saints.

Rom. 6. 17.

2. Come we then from *Moral* evil, to *Penal* evil; that is, if we may not give thanks *properly* for *sin*, without *sin*; whether may we give thanks for *crosses* and *calamities*.

* this is the highest pitch of Virtue; for a true Christians language is
 * this, I cannot tell how I should suffer less, these things are but little
 * to my sins, I deserve much more at the Lords hands, here is your
 * Christian, such a one takes up his cross, and follows his Saviour: no
 * loss or cross can dishearten him, but as the Poet saith, if the
 * World break and fall about his ears, he would not be afraid. Thus
 * St. Hieron.

By whom it should seem, that to give God thanks for crosses and
 afflictions is to be numbred among those singular things which
 Christians are bound to excel in beyond Heathens and Publicans, as
 to love enemies, to bless them that curse, &c. to which our Saviour Math. 5.
 exhorts and commands.

Papists indeed tell us they are Counsels and Commands, and there-
 fore required only of perfect ones in order to merit, and supererogati-
 on, which is a blasphemous fancy; those duties, and so this of thank-
 fulness, in every thing is required of every Christian; *virtute praecepti*,
 this is the will of God concerning you, saith my Text.

Why and how we do give thanks in and for afflictions.

Quere 4.

I. We must give thanks for good, afflictions are not evil but good: *Psal. 119.*
David tells you so, and wherein, which every child of God also finds, *67, 68, 71.*
 To this agrees that of the Schooles, that crosses are not evil, but good. *Bel & others.*

1. Because inflicted by the Lord who is the chief good.
2. Because suffered by the Lord Jesus, who is the chief good;
3. They conform us to the Lord, who is the chief good.
4. They prepare us for communion with the Lord in Heaven, which
 is our chief good; therefore be thankful for crosses.

II. We must thank God for every token of his Fatherly love; but
 now crosses and troubles are such Fatherly love-tokens. *Whom the Lord Heb. 12. 6.*
loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth; there-
 fore give thanks for them, as well for the rod, as for bread.

This is thank-worthy, this is acceptable to God, God will thank us
 for suffering patiently, therefore we must thank him for inflicting it as
 a tender father on beloved sons. *1 Pet. 2. 19, 20.*

Would you be counted bastards? *Alexander* cashiered one of his
 name that would not fight; the *Eagle* is said to cast off those young
 ones that cannot bear the sight of the Sun; and some *Germans* coun- *Et cum blandi-*
 ted such children spurious brats that could not swim. So our Heavenly *vis pater es, &*
 Father will never own them for his children that will not submit to his *nam cedis pater*
 rod, and kiss it too. *Lord when thou strokest and when thou strikest thou* *es, Aug. in*
art. alike a Father, saith St. *Austin.* *Psal 98.*

III. The.

III. The Lord by afflicting his People doth prevent sin, and purge it. Therefore give thanks for it, for this is good, because it frees us from the greatest evil.

2 Cor. 12. 7.

1. He prevents sin by it, *(saith Paul)* I should be exalted above measure; there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me.

Isa. 27.

Ch 7/05:

2. He purgeth sin by it; *by this* (saith the Prophet) *shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged.*

Now do we not thank and pay the *Chirurgion* that lets out our bad blood, that lanceth our festered sores, that cuts out our proud and rotten flesh? yes surely we do thank him; do we not also thank the Physician, that keeps us to a strict diet, confines us to our chamber, gives us bitter pills and potions, and crosses our appetites? yes we do thank him, for hereby he cures a disease, defends and preserves both our health and life.

Now what els I befeech you doth the Lord do more or les by all
that we suffer at his hands, and doth not he deserve our thanks, as well
as the Physician and Chirurgion?

Lib. 5. de just.
cap. 23.

When we are vexed and plucked, then ought we more especially to give the Lord thanks, who as a most indulgent Father will not suffer our corruptions to spread further, but represses and corrects them by severe strokes and scourges: saith *Lactantius*.

Prov. 23. 14.

withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not dye: thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from Hell. O blessed rod that can do this! Gods rod doth it surely. Then it's better to go to Gods house of correction, than to the place of torment. happy children then who have the Lord for their Father and for their Physician; this he takes for one of his eminent titles, the Lord thy Physician, Exod 15. 26. he doth it skillfully, easily, safely, quickly, thoroughly, according to all the properties of the best Artists, therefore, thank him.

Βίλπον δανύ
παλινδρῶναι ἡ
βαπύω δρῶ.
παμδρῶναι.
Naz.
חנה רפא
Exod. 2. 26.
Taro, cito, sine
dolore.

CH. IV. We must thank the Lord for afflicting us, and for laying the cross upon us, because it is so far below what we deserve at his hands. What is a drop of wormwood sweetned, to the gall of bitterness? to the Lake of fire and Brimstone? hear what Zophar tells Job: *O that God would speak, and open his lip: against thee, and that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! I know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than shine iniquity deserveth.*

Job 1. 5, 6

The like faith holy *Euseb.*; and then surely we have much more
cause to say so; and is not this ground of thankfulness. If thou
suffer

suffer a thousand evils, thou wilt never suffer what thou meritest, saith that Father.

Jesus Christ drank off the draggy part of the cup for us; we do but as it were sip for fashion, that we may seem to pledge, for to drink as he drank it we cannot, we need not, *Mat. 20. 22.*

Thank God then that thou hast so little a share of it, when all was thy portion by right and justice; this is thank-worthy.

V. We must give thanks in every thing, even in and for afflictions, under the rod and cross, because thereby the Lord doth discipline us, and learns us much which else we never would have learned.

By this *David* learned Gods Commandments, and they became dearer to him than thousands of gold and silver.

By this the Lord opens the ear to discipline, saith *Elisha*; even when men are bound in fetters, and beholden in cords of affliction: then he sheweth them their work, and their transgression that they have exceeded; he openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. For as wax unless it be heated and softened takes no impression of the Seal; so no man unless exercised with much affliction will receive the prints of divine wisdom.

The word commonly used by the Holy Ghost in the New Testament for chastize, signifies properly to teach a child as a School-master or Father with a rod; this is Gods way of teaching, and the best Scholars in Christs Colledge have come by their learning this way, it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth; by this the Poet saith, wise *Ulysses* was trained up. We use to say, they are usually the best Scholars that have bought their learning dearest. I am sure this is the choicest Sain:s Academy.

VI. Give thanks in and for afflictions, because hereby the Lord fits us for Heavenly glory,

Saints are called vessels of mercy prepared unto glory; but how do men make, and prepare vessels? if it be a vessel of earth, the Potter beats the clay to make it well tempered, then he moulds it on the wheel, then he bakes it in the oven, and then it's fit for use.

If it be a vessel of wood, it hath many a turn and many a cut, before it's fit.

If it be a vessel of gold or silver, it hath both heats and knocks, before it be compleat.

So must every vessel of mercy be served before it be fit for glory; we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God. Thus the Apostle *Peter* tells us also, that the tryal of our Faith being much more precious

*non judicem vel
dum dicitur in
no. 7. 2. 1. 1.
id est in manu
Christi. in Plal.
43. 1.
Corde Gregori-
um, li. 2. in
Ez. k. Rom. 19.*

Pf 119. 73, 72.

*Job 36. 8, 9 10.
The Cross
teacheth more
the way to
heaven, than
all the Doctors
Tutorum.*

*Wis. 13.
Heb. 12.
Lact 13. 21.*

*Lam. 3. 27.
Multa tulit,
fecitq. puer,
Judavit, & alibi*

*Rom. 9. 20.
Sed in alio pre-
miatur aurum
transformationibus, ut
vas fabricetur
magni precii:
Sic veluti sub
malleo sunt
fusi, premun-
turg, laboribus,
ut sint vasa
magna glorie.
Gerhardus
Ag. 14. 22.*

1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.
*Grax est coties
 la fides H.eron
 Cant. 4. 16.*

Aug in Pl. 26.

Rev. 20. 4.

Psal. 68. 13.

Gen. 49. 14.
*ut intelligere-
 mus benedictio-
 nem non nisi per
 crucem haberi
 posse. Text. de
 Bapt. cap. 8.*

*Oportet nos
 crucifigi cum
 crucifixo, ut
 glorificemur
 cum glorificato
 Macar. hom. 12.
 Phil. 3. 10.
 Rom. 8. 19.*

Luke 24. 26.

*clapitus prius
 ipse bibit potio-
 nem quam suis
 paravit. Bern.
 parv. Serm.
 Luc. in Exod.
 cap. 15.
 Rev. 1. 9.
 v. 11. 3.*

precious than gold, will be found to the praise and glory of God; for the cross is the whetstone of faith, and all other Grace, setting an edge and lustre upon it; it is the awakening of the North-wind and South-wind, to make these spices flow:

The stone that is most hewed, cut, carved, and polished is usually set in the chiefest part of the building. So are suffering Saints prepared for the highest degrees of Glory.

For these are prepared the *anreola*, those additional flowers and ornaments that all shall not partake of, say the Schools.

Those only that were beheaded or slain for the witness of Jesus, reigned with Christ a thousand years. So that it may be said of the Lords sufferers, as David speaks, *though ye have lyen among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a Dove covered with silver, and her feathers with gold.* This may be truly said, when the Lord shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like to his glorious body.

Notable and curious is that of Tertullian upon Jacobs blessing the two sons of Joseph with his hands a cross (which is granted by all) *decussatis manibus* that he might bless Ephraim the youngest with the blessing of the first born, that we might know no blessing comes to us more kindly and properly than by the cross; therefore give thanks in and for thy afflictions

VII. It is a very high privilege for a Christian to be conformed to Christ, to be Conformists to Christ, is to be nonconformists to the World, Rom. 12. 2. but now what doth more conform us unto Christ than the Cross? therefore give thanks for it. *That I may know the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death.* This is part of that excellent knowledge for which he accounted all other worldly privileges but dung. To this conformity in afflictions unto Christ we are predestinated. This Privilege appears in verse 17. *If we suffer with him, we shall be glorified together.*

This way Christ entered into glory. *Ought not Jesus to have suffered these things, and so to have entered into glory?* now if we will enter with him, we must follow after him, how? by taking up his Cross.

Christ like a good Physician first tasted the Medicine that he gave his Patient. The Cross of Christ sweetens our sufferings in the bitterness of them: as that piece of wood sweetened the waters of Marah, being cast into them.

Therefore John wrote to the Saints as partakers together of a great privilege, when he said, *Companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.*

Then

Then never hope to go another way than the Captain of our salvation hath led us, for if we baulk his track, we are lost; must we not then give thanks for affliction that conforms us to our head?

VIII. The Cross is a Christians banner, his honour, and the special favour of the Lord towards him, therefore be thankful for it.

Let not this seem a riddle or paradox, *I have you* (saith the Apostle) *in my heart, for as much as in my bonds and in the defence of the Gospel, ye are all partakers of my grace;* where by grace many understand, a special act of Gods favour to him and them, wherewith they were to account themselves highly graced.

Hence he saith again a little after, *so you it's given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake.* This he accounts a peculiar gift of God to them, whereof but few in comparison do partake.

Hence saith one upon that place, it is a most noble, yea, and almost divine thing to suffer for the Lord Jesus.

For the Lord gave Christ himself on this very account *a name above every name.* Mark what the Apostle Peter saith, *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ happy are you, for the Spirit of God & of glory resteth on you.*

Which words must be understood emphatically the highest manifestation, and operation of the spirit of God. Gods Spirit manifesteth it self variously in several subjects, but in sufferers for Christ the very Spirit and quintessence of glory seems to be extracted and poured on thee.

Upon all these accounts and many more such, we are to thank God for crosses, and corrections, because the good of them doth flow from Gods goodness, not from their nature.

When the Horseleech by the Physicians direction sucks our blood, and thereby performs a cure, the Horseleech is not to be thanked, but the Physician for his application. So the Lord can make the bloody persecutors of his people to be instruments of good to his people, no thanks to them but to him for it.

How shall a Christian bring his heart to this holy and heavenly frame, so as in every thing to give thanks? *Quere 5.*

Hearken to these few directions, and lay them up in your hearts, and draw them out in your constant practise. *Answ.*

I. *Pray earnestly for the Spirit of God;* without that Spirit thou canst never pray or praise God duly, because not spiritually; none can sanctifie the Lord God in his heart (which is the first Principle of this work) but he whose heart the Lord hath sanctified.

Qqq

The

Aug. in Pl. 51.

Phil. 1. 7.

Vers. 19.

utrumq; ostendit dei donum, quia utrumq; dicit esse donum. Aug.

Valequez in locum.

Phil. 2.

1 Pet. 4. 14.

וְרוּחַ

The Spirit, per He. emphaticum.

Canticum novum & vetus homo male concordant. Aug.

Pfal. 33. 1.

*Non musica
cordula sed cor,
Non clamans
sed amans can-
tat in aure dei.
1 Cor. 14. 15.
I will sing
with the Spirit.*

The Holy Spirit breathing in a man, makes him a living Organ tuned to, and sounding out his praise.

Praise is comely for the upright, but as uncomely in a carnal mouth as a Jewel in a swines snout.

The pompous dresses and melodious quires of *magnificats* without the Spirit of God breathing among them, is but as a *sounding brass* and a *sinkling cymbal*.

For indeed without the Spirit of God in men, they neither can nor will remember the Lords mercies, nor consider them, nor value them, nor be affected with them, nor blaze the praise of them. *The dead saith David, do not praise thee; dead hearts produce dead works, it is the spirit that quickens.*

Gen. 32. 10.
per Psalmos.
1 Tim. 1. 12, ad
17.

*Inuitat ad
magna, qui
gratanter acci-
pit modica.
Cissiod.
Animam immer-
sationi Christi
aurea redditur,
ut manus in au-
rum liquefa-
ctum in jecta
deauratur.
Chrysost.
Pfal. 111. 9.*

II. Labour to get a continual quick sight and sense of sin: this will make thee sensible of every mercy, and thankful for it. So the provocation, and merit of sin is nothing but curses, death and wrath being due to it, that yet they should be so tenderly spared, and instead of miseries shouldest enjoy blessings, how shouldest thou be affected with this, as *Mephibosheth* was with *David's* kindness to him; an humble broken heart is the most thankful heart, this was most eminent in the most eminent Saints, 1. *Jacob*, 2. *David*, 3. *Paul*, &c.

He that knows he hath forfeited all, knows he deserves nothing but the reward of that forfeiture, which is wrath; and he that deserves nothing, thanks God for every thing, even for the least drop, and crumb.

III. Behold every mercy coming to thee in the stream of *Christ's* blood, and through the Covenant of Grace; this gives the mercy both an estimate and a relish; this doth both sanctifie it, and sweeten it, and sublimite it; a crust of brown bread coming thus, is better than a purse full of gold another way; as that Kings kiss to one friend, was said to be better gold, than a cup of gold which he gave another friend.

He sent redemption to his people, he remembered his Covenant for ever, holy and reverend is his name. The deliverance there was in *David's* account, and that truly the more thank-worthy, as being upon a covenant account, for thus every mercy is a token of the Lords favour to his favourite; it is that which makes common mercies to become special mercies.

*Non tam bea-
ficium, sed ra-
tio beneficii at-
tendenda est.*

Carnal men, so they enjoy mercies, they mind not which way they come in, so they can but have them; but a child of God knows that every thing that comes through *Christ's* hands is the beter for it, and tastes the sweeter by far.

IV. Look

IV. Look on thy mercies as answers to thy Prayers, and bless the Lord for them on that account; for that's double mercy.

1. That God hath inclined and directed thine heart to beg such a mercy; for this is a special act of the Spirit of adoption, *Rom. 8. 26, 27.*

2. That he hath answer'd such Prayers, for this is a sign he accepts thee in Christ. Many blessings come in unasked for, and unlooked for: yet these require thankfulness.

But when the Lord is enquired of for the things we have, and doth grant them to us, this is a blessing, upon his own institution; and a seal to his promise; hear *David, Come near* (saith he) *and I will tell you* *Pl. 66. 16, 17.* *what he hath done for my Soul, I cryed to the Lord and he was extolled with my tongue;* as if he had said, this was a signal favour for the Lord to grant what I petitioned him for, and therefore deserves a special acknowledgment.

For this *Hannah* calls her son *Samuel*, i. e. asked of God; and *Leah* calleth her second son, *Simeon*, i. e. hearing, because God heard her Prayer for him. *1 Sam. 1. 20. G n. 29. 33.*

And *Rachel* called her son *Nephtali*, i. e. wrestling, because she wrestled for him; now as *Samuels* should be *Lemuels*, i. e. dedicated to God, so all our mercies we get by Prayer, should be the more solemnly dedicated to the Lord by thanksgiving, and such a frame of a thankful heart is a spiritual frame. *Gen. 39. 8.*

V. When any of Gods dealings do either draw us, or drive us nearer to God, this is special mercy. When we consider that well, we cannot but be greatly affected with it, and will be accordingly thankful for the mercy, or the dispensation is thereby the more merciful: mercies are drawing cords, afflictions are whipcords, to drive us; by both we are brought nearer to God, thank him.

If the chief Shepherd hunt us together, and keep us from stragling, and bring us under command, this is a mercy to Christ's sheep. If the Lord *hedg up our ways with thorns* that we cannot find our lovers, this is a mercy. *Hof. 2. 6. vers. 8, 9.*

And if the Lord recover his mercies from us, that in the want of them we may know he was the Founder and Fountain of them, this is a mercy.

When *Abolom* burnt *Joab's* corn, it was to make *Joab* (who before that kept off) come to him. So all the angry dispensations of God towards his children are, that they return to him. *Amos 4. 6. to V. 12.*

That storm that sinks and splits some ships, drives, others faster into the

the Haven. So do the troubles of this World make a true Christians voyage toward Heaven the speedier.

VI. *That Soul that is truly, and spiritually thankful, will so order his whole conversation, that God may have the glory of it.* This the Psalmist who was well skild in this Art, seems to point at often. *Who so offereth praise glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the Salvation of God.*

Psal. 50. 23.

Pl. 106. 1, 2, 3.

We cannot better glorifie God then by a well-ordered conversation, this is in every thing to give thanks indeed. Solikewise in praising the Lord, *Hallelujah: O give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* There is 1. The Doxology. 2. Invitation 3. The Reason, that we should, and why we should give thanks always.

But who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord, who can shew forth all his praise, i.e. it is impossible for any man in the world to do this great duty aright, and as he should; Blessed are they that keep judgment, that do righteousness at all times; As if he had said, This indeed is a vast duty, but yet he makes the best essay towards it, that sets himself constantly to serve God and keep his Commandments

Now this no man can do neither perfectly, but only by the merits and in the strength of Christ, he making it the desire of his soul to serve the Lord is accepted, though endeavours fall short, and therefore is pronounced blessed.

James 1. 25.

For to be a doer of the work by evangelical obedience makes him blessed in his dead; labour then to bless the Lord, not only in words, but in deed, and you shall be blessed.

Ephes. 5. 20.

VII. If we would offer thanks to the Lord acceptably, *Let us do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.* Thus are we directed by the Spirit of God.

Per eundem est decursus beneficiorum & recursus.

Rev. 8. 3, 4.
Heb. 13. 19.

Hof. 14. 2.

Jugo sacrificium.

1. Because all mercy comes to us by him.

2. Because nothing is accepted but in him.

3. Because it is one part of his priestly Office to receive the Prayers and Praises of the Saints in his golden Censer upon the golden Altar, with much Incense. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.* Alluding to that of the Prophet, who calls it, *The calves of our lips*; that through Christs Propitiatory Sacrifice our Eucharistical Sacrifices are accepted, and that we must offer these under the Gospel continually *jugiter*; Alluding to the daily Sacrifice, now this must needs sanctifie our service, because the *Altar sanctifies the Gift*, and therefore mention is made of a golden Altar in this case.*

It is the Will of God in Christ Jesus that in every thing we give thanks? v/a.
Then this serves to condemn the horrid ingratitude of Christians.

1. Those that in nothing will give thanks, at no time, for no mercy; these are swine that devour all that drops from the Tree of Gods bounty, and never looks up whence it cometh. These are worse than the *Ia. 1.*
Oxe and Ass that know their Owners and Masters cribs. These are meer *Pecora grati*
Heathens; who thought, they *profess*, they know God; yet do not glorifie *homines reperti-*
him as God, nor are thankful. These are like Buckets that run greedily *untur. Cicero.*
down into a Well when they are empty with open mouth, but when they be full they turn their hinder part upon the Well that filled them. Thus do unthankful men call greedily for mercies, and when God hath filled them, they turn the back, and not the face.

2. Another kind of unthankful men is that sort, who having received mercies from God, arrogate the honour of them to themselves.

Let *Papists* and *Pelagians*, old and new, who attribute more to free will than to grace, which the one makes the root of merits, the other gives the casting of the scale in mans conversion to it; let these see how by such Principles they can acquit themselves from the crime of Sacrilegious ingratitude, for they rob God of his glory; and then let them hear not me, but Saint *Austine* thundring against them, *O Lord,*
he that assumes the glory of any good he hath to himself, and ascribes it not
to thee, that man is a thief, and a robber, and like the Devil, who robbeth
thee of thy Glory

Thus also they who attribute their Riches, Children, Honours, Victories, Health, Safety, Knowledge, &c. to their Wits, Labours, Merits, these are ingrateful robbers of God.

Thus they burnt incense to their Drag, and Yarn.

Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* gloried in the great *Babel* of his own building.

Thus the *Assyrian* also ranted, and vaunted himself, as if by his own great Wisdom and Valour he had conquered the Nations.

But mark the end of these men: How the Lord took it, and how he dealt with them for it; He turned *Nebuchadnezzar* out to grise among the beasts; He kindled a fire in the *Assyrians* Forrest, and burnt it; He struck *Herod* that he was eaten up with worms, because he gave himself, and not God the glory.

3. Another sort of unthankful ones there is, that seem to be very thankful, but it is only complementally, and with the lip. These are like Apes that eat up the Kernel, and leave God the shells; they care not to go to the cost of a heart, or a life. thankfulness, they are cursed hypocrites, they

Solinq. cap. 15.
Qui de bono
sua, & Domine,
gloriam sibi
quirit, & non
tibi, hic fur est
& larva, & si-
milis diabolo,
&c.
Hab. 1. 15, 16.
Dan. 4. 30.

Ia. 10. 13, 14.
15.

AR. 12. 23.

Mat. 1. 14. they put him off with the blind and the lame in Sacrifice, and never once give him the Male of their Flock. God will pay them in their own coyn; they are thankful in jest, and God will damn them in earnest.

Laet. Instit. c. 3. *That man (saith Lactantius) cannot be a godly man that is unthankfull to his God.* * And Aquinas saith, *That unthankfulness hath in it the root and matter of all sin:* For it denies or dissembles the goodness of God, by which we live, move, and have our being, yea, and all our blessings, the thankful acknowledgement whereof is our indispensable homage unto God.

Unthankfulness was a huge ingredient into *Adams* sin: To sin against his Maker as soon as he was made: Yea, by whom he was so fearfully and wonderfully made: little lower than the Angels.

Psal. 139.

Unthankfulness was the sin of *Noah* and *Lor* after their deliverances, the one from water, the other from fire.

Gen. 9.

Gen. 19.

Deut. 32.

Ezek. 16. per totum.

The sins of *Israel*, that forgot their Rock, their husband that found them in the waste howling wilderness, and when they lay in their blood, no eye pitying them, cast out to the loathing of their persons.

The sin of *David*; 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8, 9,

The sin of *Solomon*, 1 Kin. 11. 9.

The sin of *Hezekiah*, 2 Chron. 31.

Pereptoria res est ingratitudo, hostis gratiae, inimica salutis.
Bern. Serm. 1.
de 7 miser.
Ingratitudo est, ventus urens, & exsiccat fontem gratiae, fluentia misericordia. Idem.

The great sin of the Gospel is unthankfulness, by sinning against the light, love, free grace, and rich patience of God in it; this is to turn his grace into wantonness; to prefer darkness before light, to neglect so great salvation, not to come under Christs wing when he calls to us to despise his goodness and long-suffering, leading to repentance, not to come to him that we may have life; to resist his Spirit, and trample on his blood.

The sin of the greatest sinners in the Book of God is unthankfulness.

The sin of the Angels that kept not their first station; The sin of *Cain* in his offering; The sin of the *Sodomites*.

Quousque se diffundit gratia, ed patet in gratitudo.

The sin of the Old World; the sin of *Saul*; the sin of *Jeroboam* the son of *Nebat*; the sin of *Nabal*; the sin of *Hannun*; the sin of *Judas*; the sin of *Julian*; And of Antichrist, all is unthankfulness.

Exhort.

I shall conclude with a solemn exhortation to all that hear this word, and profess the Lord Jesus, and to be ruled by the Will of God in Christ Jesus revealed, that they study and practice this great, this comprehensive duty of thankfulness, consider, that no People in the World have

have such cause of thankfulness as Christians: They have received more mercy than any, therefore there is the more of them required, therefore the Lord takes their unkindness the more unkindly. Sins against mercy will turn mercy into cruelty, and patience into fury.

*crecentibus do-
na crescant do-
na non ratione.
Deut. 32. 6.*

To be unthankful to a bountiful God, is for a sroward child to beat his mothers breasts that gave him suck, and to kick his Fathers bowels.

The Lord, that he might upbraid his peoples ingratitude, compares them to a Bullock that was fatted in good pasture, and then kicked, *Deut. 32. 15.* to *Verf. 25.* And what this cost you may read there.

When the Lord would preserve in his People the memorial of his mercies see how he orders them: Every man was to come with a basket of fruits, and the Priest was to take it, and set it down before the Lord, and he that brought it was to make a solemn confession of his own poverty and wretchedness, of Gods goodness and faithfulness to him, and of his engagements to the Lord for the same. Hereby the Lord let them know that they had all from him, and held all at mercy, and this was their homage that they paid him. Oh, what shall we then render to the Lord for all his benefits? *who were Syrians ready to perish, who with our staff pass this Jordan, and now are two hands; who have not only neither springs, but upper also, the Lord hath opened a fountain and a treasure for us.*

*Deut. 26. 1. to
10.*

Think of this all you *Malecontents* and murmurers, read over your mercies, preserve a Catalogue of them, compare them with what others enjoy. It is not with you as with Heathens, you have the Gospel, if it torters, as if it were in a moving posture from you, thank your unthankfulness for it.

You have had it with peace and plenty, and if that hath glutted you, and the Lord is now curing your surfeit by a sparer diet, thank your wantonness for it.

Yet consider *Turks* and *Tartars* are not in your bowels, burning your houses, ravishing wives and daughters, killing old, sick, and infants, carrying away the rest Captives, drinking healths in your dead Nobles skulls digged out of their graves, yet all this is done among the poor Protestants in *Transilvania*, Sword, Famine, and Pestilence making havock in that flourishing Country, not to speak of other places, what is felt or feared; is not this ground of thanks?

Consider yet again, what we have had long, and still have, though the *Land is full of sin from one end to the other.* What we have deserved, and yet do, even to be stripped naked of all life and liberty, peace and plenty, to have our doors shut up, our lights put out, our Teachers all driven

into

into corners, the good land to spue us out, and the abomination that maketh desolate to enter in among us, our Land to keep her Sabbaths because we prophaned the Lords Sabbaths; the voice of the screech-owl to be heard instead of the voice of the Turtle; *It is the Lords mercies we are not consumed*: For what priviledge or Pagent have we to be secured and indemnified above others?

How long ago had Divine Justice made short work with us, if Divine Patience had not been stretched to long suffering: If Mercy had not held back the hand of Gods Vengeance, as the Angel caught *Abrahams* Knife when it was lifted up to kill his Son? for surely methinks Mercy and Justice have been long wrestling, and the Lord hath said long of *England*, as he said of *Ephraim*, *How shall I give up England, how shall I make thee an Admah and Zebaim, as Sodom and Gomorrah?*

Now consider this all ye that forget the Lords benefits, lest he come not only as a Moth to you, as he seems to be already in your Trade in your health, in your food, but as a Lion to tear and go away. Wherefore, would you value your mercies, consider others miseries; would you thank God for them, consider your abuse and unworthiness of them; would you continue and encrease them, be thankfull for them; would you taste sweetness in them, get a sanctified use of them; would you honour God in every condition, make a holy improvement of every dispensation; would you be Christians indeed, *In every thing give thanks, for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.* Turn your hearts and tongues to it here, and you shall be chosen into the Quire of Angels to perform it for ever in Heaven.

*Haud quicquam
ita proprie ter-
ris representat
caelestis habita-
tionis statum,
sicut claritas
deum laudan-
rium. Bern.
Ser. 1. in Cant.*

How



How may we get rid of Spiritual Sloth, and know when our activity in duty is from the Spirit of God?

Psal. 119. 37. part ult.

Quicken me in thy way.



His Psalm shines and shews it self among the rest
— *Sicut inter ignes Luna minores.* A Star in the
firmament of the Psalms, of the first and great-
est magnitude; this will readily appear if you
consider either.

I. The manner it is composed in, or

II. The matter it is composed of.

I. The manner it is composed in is very ele-

gant.

2. The matter it is composed of is very excellent.

I. The manner it is composed in is very elegant, full of art, rule,
method, Theological matter in a Logical manner, a Spiritual Alpha-
bet framed and formed according to the Hebrew Alphabet.

II. The matter it is composed of is very excellent, full of rare sub-
limities, deep mysteries, gracious activities, yea glorious extasies. The
Psalm is made up of three things.

1. Prayers. 2. Praises. 3. Protestations.

1. Prayers to God. 2. Praises of God. 3. Protestations unto God.

My Text belongs unto the first, and may fitly be stiled *David's Le-
tany*; where you have.

1. His *Libera Domine*, Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.

2. His *exaudi Domine*. *Quicken me in thy way.*

In this, these three parts are considerable.

1. The Act, *Quicken*. 2. The Subject, *Me*. 3. The Object, *thy way*.

R r r

In

In the prosecution of which Scripture I shall do these three things.

1. Explicate the Terms. 2. Deduce a Corollary. 3. Resolve the Cases.

I. For explication. *Quicken*. There is a two-fold quickening.

1. Proper and moral. 2. Improper and metaphorical.

1. Proper and moral, which is two-fold. 1. Total. 2. Partial.

1. Total. Which is the raising a dead body to natural life; thus was *Lazarus* raised, *John* 11. 43, 44. So was *Drishelme* of *Northumberland* raised if credit may be given to *Bede* and *Hervs Armonius*.

2. Partial which is the restoring a body declined and decayed with sickness, or sorrow to Spirits and vigorous energies. So was *David*, whose body by grief and sorrow was made a meer Skeleton, *Psal* 31. 10, 17. *H Ezekiah* by sickness brought so low, that he was become spiritless, yet he was raised up again, upon which he composes that rare Hymne or Canticle of praise to God; *Isai* 38. 10.

II. Improper and metaphorical, which is likewise two-fold.

1. Total. 2. Gradual.

I. Total, which is the raising of a Soul stark dead in sin to Spiritual Life, *Ephes* 1. 2. and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin.

II. Gradual, which is the raising of a dull and drowsie Soul from sloth and sluggishness to high, yea highest degrees of vivacity, and activity; for this you have *David* praying here, and in *Psal* 143. 11. *Quicken me; O Lord, for thy Names sake*. In this description it will be very necessary to explain sloth, and activity.

1. Spiritual Sloth is threefold.

1. Resolving Sloth. 2. Delaying Sloth. 3. Disturbing Sloth.

1. Resolving Sloth; is, when a Soul is settled upon it's lees, and resolves to lie still, and never to stir in that momentous concernment of its own eternal Salvation. *Solomon* excellently deciphereth this, *Prov* 26. 14. *As the door turns upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed*; as the door turns upon the hinges, and never stirs from his place, so the slothful turns upon the bed of security, and never turns from his purpose. *Jer* 44. 16, 17. they were resolved to worship the Queen of Heaven, come life, come death. Such was the Souldier's resolution, who had on his Target God and the Devil pictured, under God *si vis non vis*, under the Devil *si ne rogatus*.

2. Delaying Sloth, when a person doth intend to look after Soul-concernments, but not yet, they will borrow a day, a little time. Much like that sluggard, *Prov* 6. 10. *Thy a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding*.

Hist. Ang. l. 5. cap 13.

* *Plato*, lib. 10. de Rep.

Ferrarius, l. 7. *Reip.* fol. 162.

Ruffus.

folding of the hands to sleep. When the sluggard is call'd to arise in the morning, he resolves to do it; only intreats one little, one short nap more, and then he will arise. So when some are called to awaken, arise and walk with God in his way in the morning of their age, they crave one short nap more first, and then they will do it; give them leave to get such an estate, to obtain such an honour, to match such a child, to satisfy such a lust, and then will they be for God. Such a sluggard was *Austin*, a little longer, O Lord, a little longer, presently, presently. *Matth. 25. 10.* the five foolish Virgins resolved to have oil in their lamps and vessels, only they would take a nod. Oh how dangerous is delaying Sloth? The Virgins deserting, provokes Christ to denying. *Archias* being merry at supper, had a letter sent him that concern'd his life, and though desired to read it, puts it up into his pocket, saying, *non deservit credula.* I'll mind serious things to-morrow, but he lived not unto the morrow, to mind those serious things. Such another sluggard was the rich man, *Luke 12. 20. Scilicet hac nocte. Tolle moras: semper nocuit differre paratiss.* *Alexander* being asked how he came to conquer the World, replied, *Nunquam differre volens;* if you will overcome more than *Alexander* did, not only the World, but also *Sathan*, and your own flesh, the worst and strongest enemy of all, you must carefully lay hold on every lock of opportunity, and expeditiously improve the same.

Paululum, paululum, modo & modo, & hoc erat sine modo. Aug. lib. confess. 8. cap. 5. Plutarch in Moral.

Lucas.

3. Disturbing Sloth is, when a person doth intend and endeavour to walk in Gods way, but Sloth as rust hinders the wheels of his Soul from coming to, and running in the way of God. The *Tarpedo* if it touch but any part of the angle that a man holds in his hand, *corpus corpesere facit,* it benumbs and stupifies all the members that they cannot stir or strive. Such malignant influence hath Sloth upon the Soul; the chariots of Saints Souls should drive as *Jehu's* heartily and furiously, *2 Kings 9. 20.* and not as *Pharaoh's* chariots heavily and faintly, *Exod. 14. 25.* all the agility of the Soul, and all the ability of the body are required in Gods way, and about Gods work, whatsoever comes short of this is Sloth, as whatsoever comes short of Virtue is Vice.

Plin. nat. hist. lib. 32. cap. 24

2. Activity in duty is a victorious conquest over the Great *Goliath* Sloth, and riding triumph in the way, work, and worship of God; activity is a *David's* dancing before the Ark with all his might; there are three things which concur and contribute to complete this activity in duty.

1. *Tota animi intentio.*
2. *Inexplebilis cupiditas agendi.*

Baf in reg. Brev. resp. 59.

Rrr 2

3. *Affidui-*

3. *Affiduitas in actione.*

1. A streining and stretching of the soul to the utmost peg, and highest pin, a putting of it upon the tenter-hooks in service.

2. An unsatiable and unsatisfiable desire or longing for the effecting and accomplishing of a duty.

* Plutarch in
vit. ejus.

3. A constant and continual waiting, and working until the duty be perfected; take these three exactly shadowed out in *Archimedes*; * he was drawing his Mathematical lines when *Marcellus* entered the gates of *Syracuse*, yea when the Souldiers entered his Study, that he never minded them, there was the intention of his mind; when the Souldiers pull'd him by the sleeve, he cries out, let me alone to finish my Scheme; there was his inextinguishable desire of perfecting it; when the Souldiers drew their swords to run him thorow, he yet plyed his business; there was his assiduity in his action; here was *Hoc age* indeed. Oh what a shame would it be for us Christians, if a Heathen in his way should

Joseph, de. bel.
Jud.

outgo, and out do us in Gods way. Stupendous was the activity of the Jewish Priests about their Sacrifices when their enemies were broke in upon them. I shall commend two Texts of Scripture to you, which do most lively obumbrate tepidity, and servidity, *Rom. 12. 11, 12.* Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. *ἡμετέροις ἐν τῇ δουλείᾳ.*

οὐκ ἐν τῇ
τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ
τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ
τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ

In festinatione non lentis, here *festina lente* is out of doors. We must fly as upon the wings of the wind; our heart must be like the *Primum Mobile* to wheel and whirl us about with a most rapid motion; fervent in spirit, boiling or burning hot, all on fire and flame, serving the Lord, continuing instant in Prayer, strenuously and steadfastly wrestling with God, as *Jacob* did, who as a *Prince* had power with God, *Hos. 12. 3.* this is that *Ultimum virium* which is expected, and only respected of God; God accounts nothing else Prayer but this, *Isa.*

Ea fide & fo-
ducia, ut Dei
manus teneat.
A Lap, in Loc.

64. 7. *And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee*, i. e. with that Faith and fortitude to hold Gods hands, as *Moses*, *Jacob*, and others did; the Cock is a rare Emblem of this activity, who raises, and rowses himself, claps his wings, and then crows with all his might, *Heb. 6. 11, 12.* We desire that everyone of you do shew the same diligence, *vers. 12.* That you be not slothful, not of a slow pace, to want fire, yea and fear too, that not run in Gods way. *Non amo nimium diligenter* was the saying of a Heathen; but God will never say so, because we can never be too diligent and devout in his service; and surely if *Jacob* did serve *Laban toto conatu*, *Gen. 31. 6.* with all my power have I served your Father, then much more should we with all our industry and endeavour serve our Father.

οὐδὲν ἐξ ὧν
& δὲ τοῦ
εὐρο.
Signis, quasi
se ignis, sine
igee.

Thy

Thy way; by way of Emphasis, in opposition to and exaltation of, above all other ways,

There is a fourfold way.

1. *Via Mundi*, the way of the World, and that is *spinosa*, thorny,
2. *Via Carnis*, the way of the Flesh, and that is *insidiosa*, treacherous,
3. *Via Satanae*, the way of the Devil, and that is *tenebrosa*, darksome,
4. *Via Domini*, the way of God, and that is *gratiosa*, gracious.

This way is two fold.

1. *Via velata*, a concealed way, and that is of his Privy Counsels,
2. *Via revelata*, a revealed way, and that is of his publick Commands.

1. *Via beneplaciti*, of his Privy Counsels, Rom. 11. 33. *How unsearchable are his Judgements, and his ways past finding out?* He that shall go about to seek and search for that way, must return a *Non est inventa*, and shall prove himself a true *Ignoramus*, verl. 34. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord? And who hath been his Counsellor?* the best of mortals were never honoured with that title, to be one of Gods Privy Counsellors.

2. *Via signi*, of his publick and common road of Commandments, Psal. 119. 1. *Blessed are the undefiled in the way: who walk in the way of the Lord* v. 27. *Make me to understand the way of thy Precepts*, Isa. 2. 3. *He will teach Sions Scholars of his ways, and they will walk in his paths*; Isa. 30. 21. *Thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it.*

We must not be so impudent as to desire to walk in the way of his Privy Councils, nor so imprudent as not to walk in the ways of his publick Commands.

The secret things belong to the Lord our God: But those things which are revealed, belong to us, and to our children for ever, that they may do all the works of this Law, Deut. 29. 29. Having thus planed my way to the Text, or rather explained the way in my Text; I proceed to the deduction of a Corollary, or Conclusion from the words, which is the second thing I premised and promised.

Every Saint is very apt to be a slug in the way and work of God. *Quicken me* (says one of the chiefest and choicest of Saints) *in thy way*; and it is as much as if he should say in plain terms, Ah Lord, I am a dull Jade, and have often need of thy Spur, thy Spirit; This Prayer of David seems proof enough to this point; but if you desire farther confirmation, I shall produce an argument, *instar omnium*, that none shall dare to deny, nor be able to disapprove, and that is drawn from the topick of your own experience, and this is *argumentum lugubre*,

τὸ μαρτυρεῖν
ἡ δὲ ζωὴ
ἡ δὲ τὰ δαί-
μονια πνεύ-
ματος ἀγίου,
Theod. dial. 1.

Distr.

* *Cecidit quomodo
huc me libe-
res, non quomodo
huc ceciderim
quarar Aug.
Epist. 29
Eben! quot
druq. habet san-
ctus David, vel
potius spiritus
sanctus ad suam
Cytharam. Pat.
in su. de p. 7.
v. 1. 1. 1. 1.
Ils. 57. 8. & ut.
Appetit nobis
in Paradiso
oculos satan.
nunc omnis la-
bor in eo nobis
est, ut eos iterum
elaudamus &
obtemperemus. Lu-
ther.
Ridiculum est
quod quidam
respondent se
spectaculis non
moveri. quid. n.
an ferrei. an
saxei.
an Adamantini
sunt. an sapien-
tiores, fortiores
sanctiores quam
David, Chryl.
in Psal. 51.
Nont. 1.
Ag. in corpori-
bus simillima
est agrius co-
nium. Cic.
de fin. 7. 13.*

lagabre, like a Funeral Anthem, very sad and sorrowful Do you not feel, and find, to the grief of your own souls, that whereas you should weep as if you wept not, rejoyce as if you rejoyced not, and buy as if you possessed not; *Inverse ordinis*, you weep for losses as if you would weep out your eyes; you rejoyce in temporal comforts as if you were in heaven; and you buy as if it were for ever and a day, *Psa. 49. 11.* But *à contraria*, You pray as if you prayed not, hear as if you heard not, work for God as if you worked not. Now we know *experto credas* * a man that sticks fast in a ditch needs no reasons to prove he is in, but remedies to pull him out. Your best course will be to propose the case how you may get rid of this unwelcome guest spiritual sloth; it is a case we are all concerned in. *A fini aures quis non habet*; Every man and mortal hath some of the Asses dulness and sloth in him; and therefore I have brought a whip of ten strings to scourge this sloth and dulness out of us.

1. Keep a strict watch over your eyes at all times, especially when you are in duty; they eyes are the Port-holes that Sin and Satan creep in at; it is accounted a great piece of charity to a mans body to close his eyes when he is dead: I am sure it is more charity to our souls to close our own eyes whilst we are living. See what a strict guard *Job* keeps upon his eyes, that would not permit them at any time to view vain or wanton Objects, *Job 31. 1.* *I have made a covenant with mine eyes, why then should I look upon a maid?* And the Prophet seems here to imply, that unless God would turn away his eyes from beholding vanity, he should never be quickned in his way; It is *removere prohibens*, beholding vanity forbids the hanes between the soul and quickning. If you will keep your houses warm, you must keep your doors shut: If you will keep your hearts hot in a duty, you must keep your eyes shut. If those doors stand wide open for all comers and goers, either your soul, *Dinah* like, will be gadding out, or Satan will be getting in, by which the poor soul will be defiled and deflowred.

2. Send sin packing bag and baggage? these two mutually generate one the other,

Alter me genuit, eadem mox gignitur ex me. Sin begets sloth, and sloth begets sin: Sloth in *David* made him sinful, and sin in *David* made him slothful. Sin is the souls sickness, now sickness makes men lazy, lister, loath to stir. There is a disease incident to mans body, called the Lithargy, which makes him drowsie, sleepy, negligent, and forgetful, it springs from a cold Cathart of a pitchy and glutinous nature which cools and benums the brain; Sloth is the Souls Lithargy, which makes it sluggish, negligent, forgetful, this arises from the Cathart of sin,

sin, benumbing and stupifying the heart, and of all sins, turn Covetousness out of doors. There is a disease in the body, called the yellow Jaundice, which makes the persons look yellow all over, this springs from the overflowing of the gall, which over-spreading the whole man, makes it lifeless, listless: Covetousness is the yellow Jaundice of the soul, which arises from the overflowing of the heart with love to yellow gold, by which a Christian is dull'd and deadned. Thrust a Knife into the earth, and it takes away the edge; throw earth upon the fire and it deadens the heat let but earthly mindedness creep into the heart; it takes off the edge, and deadens the heat of it to, or in any exercise of Religion. Solomon calls it an evil disease *Eccles. 6. 2.* indeed the worst of diseases, a complicated disease; this disease does not only dead, but destroy the soul, *1 Tim. 6. 9.* Drowns men in perdition, *Ver. 10.* *The love of money is the root of all evil.* The birth of money is the burial of the mind; therefore our Saviour, *Luk. 12. 15.* bids us take heed and beware of Covetousness: A double Caution, that we might have a double care. Above all keepings keep Covetousness out of thy heart, *Pro. 4. 23.* for that will not only hinder thee from being active in duty, but help thee to be active against duty. The Pharisees who were covetous, derided him, *Luk. 6. 14.* They that drink of the water of the River *Hipanis*, at first are delighted with it, but afterward are so hurt by it, that *non injuria execrantur*. It is most true of *Chrysorreas* the yellow River, at first draught it pleases, but afterward it makes them so dead drunk, that they become *Dor-mice* for ever after.

Aurugo, ab aureo colore, ut Med.

Scythians smothered their Gods in the dust, Christians bury their godliness in the dunghill.

Fumus pecunie, fumus animæ. Leoc.

Salmus, c. 14:

Ζῶν ὁ ἱερῆς

Ignis animæ: but vim dat mi-risticam. Varro.

3. Frequent a quickning Ministry, *Ver. 50.* *Thy Word hath quickned me.* The Word of God is quick and powerful, *Heb. 4. 12.* living and operative, not only *formaliter*, and in it self, but also *virtualiter*, in the vertue and efficacy of it, it makes men lively in their operation. *Acts 7. 38.* *ῥῶμαζοντα*, Oracles making lively, *1m. 5. 14.* *I will make my words in thy mouth fire.* Fire; as it is the most noble, so it is the most active Element, and makes other things active. Creatures almost dead for cold brought to the fire are made active and nimble: Witness *Æsops* Snake which the Country man brought in his hand, but when it had received heat from the fire, it disturbed the whole house. Dr. Ames relates, that there was once such cold Preaching in *Paris* that the Protestants were constrained to go into the Country to a godly Minister to be warmed; A godly Minister will warm a cold heart, and put quickness into a drowsie spirit.

4. Make out to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose Promise and Office it is to make us active and vivacious, *Joh. 10. 10.* *I am come that they might*

might

*Anima dat vi-
ram & vivu-
citatem corpori,
Christus dat
vitam & viva-
citatem anima.*

Might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Christ came not only to make us alive, but also to make us lively. Persons who are slothful by reason of cold stiffening their joynts, make out to the Mineral and Metalline baths which heal and help them: The blood of Christ is the most precious mineral hot bath in the world, it will doubtless cure and quicken all cold and dull souls that come into it, *Zech. 13. 1.* It is the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, Sloth, it is a very foul sin and filthy uncleanness, *1 Joh. 1. 7.* And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleansed us from all sin. The sin of Sloth, which in some sense may be called all sin, it being *Pulvinar satanae*, the devils pillow that he layes his head on in the soul, *1 Pet. 2. 4, 5.* Come to Christ the living Stone, and you shall come from Christ lively Stones.

5. Get quickening love to the ways of God.

*Ovid lib. 1.
Amos 9.*

Qui non vult fieri desideriosus, amet.

*Omnis anima
motus radix
est amor. Paris.*

Pliny tells us, That a rod of Myrtle in the hand of a Traveller will never suffer him to flag or faint, but keeps him fresh and lively to his journeys end, I am sure where love is in the heart, it will carry a man in the way of God with life. The Apostles did triumph in their tribulations; and how so? *Because the love of god is shed a bread in our hearts by the holy Ghost, which is given unto us Rom 5. 5.* *Orig.* is plentifully poured out as wine into bottles, which makes it spiritul, Love turns all pains into pleasures, and perills into perfumes. Love is the fore-horse in the souls Chariot, who draws all the other affections and faculties after him, what a loadstone was *Shechems* love to *Dinah*, *Gen. 34. 19.* It makes him communicate his wealth, change his Religion, circumcize his fore-skin. See how spiritual Love wrought in *Paul*, it was as strong Physick, ready to work out his bowels, *2 Cor. 5. 14.* For the love of God constraineth us; Love hath not only an impulsive, but also a compulsive power, *συγκει.* Love is a grace that is always big-bellied, and is in labour, always being delivered of some good duvy or other. This Love put *Paul* upon exceeding pains, and excessive perils.

*ubi amor est
non est labor,
sed sapor. Bern.
Serm. 85. in
Cant.*

*Sic tantum po-
buit cupiditas,
quid potest cha-
ritas? Aug.*

*Metaphora &
parcurientibus
sumpta. Grot*

1. Exceeding pains, that never meer man took the like, *1 Cor. 15. 10.* *I laboured more abundantly than they a ll;* It must be great pains to preach the gospel fully from *Jerusalem* round about to *Illyricum*. *Rom. 15. 10.* & *vixit in circulo*, or *circum*, making *Jerusalem* the Point, and the Regions round about the Circumference, and then the space could not be less than four thousand Miles: But if you take it in a collateral

B. 71,

collateral Line, taking in the Regions of *Aspica, Boetia, Achaia, Epirus, Asia minor, Cilicia, Cappadocia*; &c. it was 2000 Miles; but if you take it in a direct Line from *Jerusalem* to *Stridon*, a Town in *Illyricum*, it was above a thousand Miles; and though these tiresome journeys might have apologized for sparing, or at least for curtailing duties; yet *Paul* never measured out his pains by a few sands in a glass, but spent much time among the Saints in Praying, Preaching, Disputing. Very memorable is that pains of his, *Acts* 20.7. where *Paul* spends all the time from the Disciples meeting together on the Lords day, until midnight in holy Exercises.

3. His excessive perils; what a large Catalogue have you of them, *2 Cor.* 11. 23, ad 28. *In stripes above measure: In prisons more frequent: In deaths oft: of the Jews five times received I forty stripes (save one): Thrice was I beaten with rods: Once was I stoned: Thrice I suffered ship-wrack: A night and a day I have been in the deep: In journeying often in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own Countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness;* All this laid together, well may we say with him, "There was never a more fierce persecutor of the Gospel, nor a more fervid propagator of the Gospel; The first proceeded from his hatred against Christ, the last proceeded from his love to Christ."

* *Nemo acior inter persecutores, nemo prior inter peccatores.*
Aug. Tom. 10. pag. 202.

6. By faith apply the quickening Promises, and the Promises of quickening.

1. The quickning Promises; Promises are steel spurs that will reach the dull heart to the quick; they are singular Plaisters, if well applied, to draw out the corruption of sloth; they are the sovereign *Elixirs* whose quintessence will make the soul full of spirits, *2 Pet.* 1.4. *Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature.* Precious Promises, as stones, are precious, which have egregious vertue in them, that by them we might be made partakers of the Divine Nature, not of the substance of God, as *Servetus* stubbornly defended even to death; But of those divine qualities and gracious dispositions, which will stand with Gods Nature to communicate, and our nature to participate. Now Gods Divine Nature is an *Act*, and our Divine Nature is active: Now the right applying promises will be very vertuous to make us vigorous, to come as nigh the image and life of God as possibly we can. *Plato* saies, it is our chiefest good, *Deo penitus conformem fieri*, to bear the Character of God upon us.

Cardan. subst.
l. 7.

Bez. in loc.
Non transformatione naturae humanae in divinam, sed participatione donorum quibus conformes divinae naturae sumus. Par.

Sff

2. The

2. The Promises of quickning. David presses God to be as good as his word, *Psal.* 119. 25. *Quicken thou me according to thy word.* He is often upon this string, *Ner.* 107, 154. resolving not to let God alone until he kept his word, *Isa.* 40. 31. *But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.* Our soul, as a Bee, must suck honey from this flower to quicken it self. Say thus to thy self: Soul, God hath promised I shall mount up with Eagles wings, fly through difficulties and duties with celerity, he is a God able, true, willing, therefore I may be assured of this assistance. Oh this honey will enliven thee more than *Jonathans* honey enlightened him, *1 Sam.* 14. 26, 29. Who must dye because he had eaten honey, and if he had not eaten honey he must have died.

Comms in ca-
lum ut deum
quasi manufacta
precatibus
ambimus o-
vantes, hac vi-
deo grata.
Tertul. ad 39.
Asinus more
venatorum per-
sequentium se-
ram. Aret.
Ignat. ad Epist.
ad Rom.

En amo te, &
hoc parum est,
amem validius.
Aug. lib. de
Mcd. c. 18.

Bona comes
pro v. biculo.

7. Mind quickning examples. A dull Jade will put himself faster on when he sees other horses gallop before him. The Apostle having mustered up in rank and file the Examples of those famous Worthies, *Heb.* 11. Does, *Heb.* 12. 1. excite them with patience to run the race that was set before them. If the rare acts of *Miltiades* would not suffer *Themistocles* to sleep, then the famous Actions of Gods Worthies should not suffer us to slumber. View *Elias* how he went up in a fiery Chariot to heaven in his spirit, before he went in a fiery Chariot to heaven in his person *James* 5. 17. Eye *Paul* how industriously and indefatigably he pursues, even as a Beagle his chase with full cry, and all celerity, *Phil.* 3. 10, ad 15. Observe *Ignatius* how he goes to the beasts to be devoured, as if he had gone to a Bridal to be married. Lastly, Slight not the Martyrs in *Q. Matthes* dates, who went to the fire as if they had been going to a bone-fire. *Seest thou this woman,* (saith our Saviour to *Simon* of *Mary Magdalen*) *with what activity and affection she hath washed and wiped my feet,* (her tears being the water, her hair the towel) *let it provoke thee to more diligence and devotion,* *Luk.* 7. 44, 45. Examples are pricking and provoking goads to quicken us: fires to light our candles by, to heat our bodies with.

8. Keep quickning company, As bad company is water to quench, so good company is oyl to quicken fervour, As Iron sharpens Iron, so one gracious heart sets an edge upon another, *Prov.* 27. 17. Holy Companions are bellows, *draegomogen* to blow up, and make burn the graces that lye in embers, *2 Tim.* 1. 16. The gracious affections of Saints are called beds of spices, *Cant.* 6. 2. Holy conference of holy company is the rubbing and chafing those spices to make them sent and send forth their perfumes. *Alexander* where ever he came, perfumed the Room with his

his

his presence; so does every believer with his speeches. David who desires quickning; picks out quickning company. *I am a companion of all them (rich or poor) that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts,* Psal. 11. 63. Paul is pressed in spirit by the company and conference of *Silas and Timotheus*, Acts 18. 5. the two Disciples hearis buca'd within them in their journey to *Emans*, by that sweet discourse they had with Christ, *Luke 4. 32.*

9. Consider quickning considerations. They that are apt to faint and tire in a journey, carry about their bottles of water to quicken their spirits; let these ten considerations be such bottles to you when you tire in the journey of a duty.

I. Consider how odious and abominable Sloth is to man, or God; the *Romans* judged sloth and idleness worthy of the greatest contempt. *Asinus ad tyram, Asinus ad tibiam*, are Proverbs of the greatest derision and disgrace: how contemptibly does *Jacob* speak of *Issachar*, *a strong As* couching down between two burthens, *Gen. 49. 14. 15.* yea God himself refuses the first-born of an *As* in Sacrifice, *Exod. 13. 13.* *Bellarmin* gives this reason, because it was *animal tardigradum*, a slow paced and sluggish creature, which God hates; God being a pure act loves pure activity. Oh what thunder-claps and cracks of threatnings may you hear from the Mount *Ebal* of his Word, able to make the most sluggish *Caligula* to creep under his bed for sheker. *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently*, *Jer. 48. 10.* *Cursed be the deceiver that hath in his flock a male, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing*, *Mal. 1. 14.* God threatens to remove the candlestick from the Church of *Ephesus*, because she was grown remiss in her first love, *Rev. 2. 5, 6.* he terrifies the Church of *Laodicea* with the menace of spuing her out of his mouth for her lukewarmness; the servant who had not returned *Cens. per Cent.* for his talent, is called wicked and slothful servant, and cast into the darkest dungeon, *Matth. 25. 16, 30.* how would this consideration well considered on, cause all slothful servants ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble.

II. Consider sloth exposes you to all manner of sin, especially these two desperate and dangerous ones.

1. Sordid Apostacy.

2. Spiritual Adultery.

I. Sordid Apostacy. Sloth in the Soul is like Great Sickness in the body of a Virgin, which makes her not only fall from her colour, strength, stomach to wholsom food, but also to long and lust after trash and trumpery, coles, foot, as the *Galatians* because they were

Zon; Anual.
t. 2.
Pet. 27. d. l. 30
cap. 16.
Eacruos ani-
mos odisse vir-
tus solit Val.
Max. lib. 2.
cap. 7.
tardis menti-
bus vitus non
facile committitur. Tust.
quest. lib. 5.

* *T. pedit as si
callum obdux-
erit fiet Aposta-
sta.*
Greg. Moral.
lib. 22, cap. 5.

avenus, without mind and metal, do therefore prove Apostates, beginning in the Spirit, ending in the flesh. *Gal. 3. 1. 3.* * falling off from fervor, will turn to falling away to folly. The slothful man will not bring his hand to his mouth, *Prov. 19. 24.* it is expounded of a slothful Minister, who will not bring *voci sua vitam suam*, his works to his words; though this be an undoubted truth of lazy and slothful Ministers, yet the Proverb holds true of all sluggards tendency to falling away in their hand from their mouth, i.e. from what they have formerly professed. Consider how great and grievous a sin Apostacy is, it was the first sin that ever was committed, it was the sin of the Devils, for which they were cast out of Heaven, and cast down into Hell, *Heb. 10. 38.* if any man draw back, my Soul shall have pleasure in him; a metaphor taken from a sluggish Jade, who finding the load come heavy, draws back again; the backslider in heart, much more in hand, from Gods way shall be fill'd with his own wales, *Prov. 14. 14.* i.e. he hath run away from his Captain, Colours Cause; and he shall have Marshal Law for it; it will be worth my pains and your patience, to give an instance what severe Martial Law God hath executed on all Runnagadoes and Revolvers.

Seult. annal.
118.

I. Ministers. Judas who revolted from his Master and Ministry, turning from being a guard to his Saviour, to be a guide to the Soldiers, *Acts 1. 17.* afterward hanged himself, his bowels burst out of his belly, and so he took his proper and peculiar place in Hell, *vers. 18. 25.* John Speiser Preacher at Ainsborough in Germany, who preached so profitably and powerfully that the common strumpets left the Brothel-houses then tolerated, and betook themselves to a better course, *Anno. 1523.* yet afterward revolting to the Papists, he perished miserably.

Joseph. Antiq.
l. 1. c. 12:
ut condimen-
tum sit aliis.
Aug. lib. 16. de
Qu. Dei, c. 30.

2. People. Remember Lots wife, *Luke 17. 32.* who turning back to Sodom, was turned into a pillar of salt to season us, that we may be preserved from the stinking sin of Apostacy. Lucian a great Professor in the daies of Trajan, but revolting, was torn in pieces, and devoured of Dogs. The Emperour Julian the Apostate was wounded with an arrow none knowing from whence in his War against the Persians, who throwing his blood up to Heaven, died, scornfully crying, *Vicisti Galilea, vicisti.*

II. Spiritual Adultery. Bodily sloth exposes to corporal Adultery.

Quariter Agrippa. no you had as in Galatians
Davids instance clears it sufficiently, *2 Sam. 11. 2.* Spiritual sloth exposes to Spiritual Adultery, *Rom. 1. 21, 23.* When they knew God, they

they glorified him not as God. What follows upon this sloth in not glorifying God as he ought to be glorified, v. 23. *They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, & to birds, & four-footed beasts, and creeping things.* Sloth is the high-way to Superstition, and Idleness the road-way to Idolatry, 1 Cor. 10 7. *neither be you idolaters, as were some of them, as it is written, the people sat down to eat, and drink and rose up to play,* by which is implied, their Idleness was the cause of their idolatry. When *Demas grew lazy and slothful in his Ministry, he turned Priest in an Idols Temple, where he had less work and more wages, 2 Tim. 4. 10 consider idolatry and superstition are God-provoking, Land-destroying, Soul-damning sins; no wonder John should conclude his Epistle with *keep your selves from Idols*, 1 John 5. 21.

III. consider how impossible it is, that creeping Snails in Gods way should ever get to their journeys end; fair end softly goes far, but never so far as Heaven, Mat. 11. 12. *The Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force,* *ἀνιζόντες. a Metaphor taken from storming Cities and Castles, they storm Heaven, hang their Petarbs of prayers on heaven gates and blow them open, that get Heaven by a conquest, storming is not work either for the fearful or the slothful, 1 Cor. 9. 24. *So run that you may obtain;* not creep, but run, not run, but so run, not indifferently, but industriously, as the racers in the Isthmian Games (to which the Apostle here alludes) who did stretch and strein their legs and limbs that they might gain the prize, Luke 13. 24. *strive to enter in at the strait gate:* Heaven hath a very strait gate, we must crowd yea crush our selves if ever we get in, ἀγωνίζεσθε, play the Champions to a very agony, for many I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able, ἴνα οὐκ εἰσέλθωσιν. shall seek with industry and endeavour.

desideria serpentibus bestitudo atroxitate ingruitur. Psal. de vit. contempl. Qui stadium currit, eniti debet, & contendit ut quam maxime possit ut vincat. Tul. 3. Off. P. sent eam ad aere.

IV. Consider how equitable it is that you should be as active in the way of God, as you were once in the way of sin and Sathan, Rom. 6. 19. *I speak after the manner of men, i. e. I speak Reason as well as Religion; as you have yielded your members servants unto uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity. As, not of quality but equality, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness;* even so: in the same manner and the same measure: this very consideration wrought effectually upon Paul himself, who as he had formerly sinned more than all, so afterwards he laboured more than all; the time he could not recover by recalling, he does recover by redeeming. What a piercing, and

* Dorabens in Synop. adeo proclive est ex seculo Mammona transire in sacerdotem diaboli. Dr. Arrowsmith, Taft. Sacr. Gravissimum peccatum. Aquis. 22. 22. quast. 94. Act. 3. Principia & crimina, & summas huius seculi reatus. Tert. Omnia qui ad paradysum redire desiderat, oportet transire per ignem & aquam. Aug. infern. ad l. 17. Brugenf. Non dormientibus provenit regnum celorum, nec otio &

Humanum quiddam dico E. asm. Sicut nos qualitatibus sed aequalitatis. Cyprianus nonnulli de apostolica plenitudine ecclesie Naz. Orat. 18.

not perform it as for your life and soul. You come to seek and see the face of God in the glass of ordinances, *Psal. 27. 8.* to have communion with him, to fetch comfort from him; to get some kisses of him, *Eant. 1. 3.* to mortifie some lust, to increase some grace, to strengthen your assurance, to testifie your duty, to express your affection, &c. now spiritual sloth hinders you of all this; dull and drowfie eyes cannot see God, heavy and slothful hearts cannot receive those benefits and blessings from God. Sloth is a sluice-gate to the current of Gods grace and favour. *Jupiter* rained a shower of gold into *Danaes* lap, but God will never rain a shower of grace, joy and comfort into a sluggards heart. If you lose the blessed sight of God here in ordinances, you shall lose the beautiful sight of God hereafter in glory, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord; then have we the kernel of a duty (every thing else is but a shell) when our employment is on Earth, and our enjoyment in Heaven; when we have to sought Gods Face, that our face comes away shining, and we have so poured out our hearts to God, that God hath poured out his heart to us, that we return home like Bees loaded with honey, filled with the comforts of the Holy Ghost.

*Lambant pe-
tram, mel usi
sugunt. Cyy.
de Cas dom.*

*Torpor non facit
Deum esse bene-
ficum.*

VII. Consider the infinite and wonderful glory, greatness, majesty of him you appear before and approach unto in your duties. A God you are not able to conceive, nor I to express. See how the Scripture shadows him out unto us (and indeed it is but a shadow in comparison of his substance) *Isa. 40. 12.* Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? and meted out Heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a ballance? *v. 15.* behold the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance: behold he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing, *v. 16.* and Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering, *v. 17.* all things before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. *Ex pede Herculis.* By this glorious description we may guess (and that is all) at enough in God, to scare us from coming to God in a dull and drowfie manner: the Heathens who worship'd the Sun for their god, durst not offer up any thing but a flying horse to him in sacrifice: our God is more glorious, swift feeling than ten thousand Suns, therefore we should not dare to offer up any thing but a winged Cherubim, or swift flying Eagle to him in service.

*Que pariet
pior nobis
veneranda
sunt, in compa-
ratione ejus
memoranda non
sunt. Greg.
Moc. l. 18. c. 27.*

VIII. Consider how industrious and indefatigable an adversary

you

Mr. Hugh Latimer's Sermon preached in the shrouds at Pauls Church in London. 1548. Fax. an. 1548. of the Plough. pag. 21. Prius conditio- nem, complexi- onem anis/cu- jusq; perspicit, & tum tentati- onis laqueos apponit. Greg. Mor. lib. 9. quoniam cum naso lude- re. Calv. Nasus derisioni dicatus. Pliny.

you have that lies always in ambush to wrong you, yea to ruine you. Sathan is the unwearied Peripatetick, who walks up and down for prey and spoil, Job 1. 7. now the dull soul is his prey; a slug ship is a purchase for the Pyrat, and a sluggish soul for the Devil; it is holy and wholsom advice given by Peter 1. 5, 8. *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil as a roaring Lyon, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;* the Devil (says pious and plain Latymer) is the most diligent Bishop in England, he is ever at his plough: no Lording nor loy- tering may hinder him, his office is to hinder Religion, to maintain Superstition, to set up Idolatry, to teach all kind of Popery, where his plough goes, there away with Books, and up with Candles, away with Bibles, and up with Beads; away with the light of the Gospel, and up with the light of Candles, yea at noon days. How should this quicken us to be active for God and our soul, that have an enemy so active always against God and our soul. You need not quicken a Mariner to make out all the cloath he can, that knows a Pyrat hath him in chase at stern; *timor addidit alas*, fear will spread the sails which are the wings of the ship, the Devil the great Pyrat of souls to make prize and. pillage of us and our graces, hath us in dayly pursute, how careful should we be to fill the sails of our souls with the strong gales of the Spirit, that he may neither overtake us, nor take us.

IX. Consider when you slothfully and sluggishly perform duties, you do but mock God, Gal. 6. 7. God is not mocked, i.e. God will not have his nose played with.

God is mocked three ways.

1. Directly when men by deriding speeches mock the Essentiality, or Personality of the Godhead. As,

1. The Essentiality, when a blasphemous Quaker shall say God is nothing else but the letters read backward *web* is (*Horresco referens*.) Or 2.^d The Personality, As

1. God the Father, when he shall be called a Cooper hooping his tubs when it thundreth, * or an old man sitting in heaven, as your common and country people usually jeer.

2. God the Son, when Julian shall gibe him with the Crucified God, or Libanus the Carpenters Son, or as pope * Leo 10th to Cardinal Bembo when he brought a piece out of the Gospel to comfort him, when sick, away with those forgeries and follies.

3. God the holy Ghost, when Securus shall call him the three headed Cerberus, and ridiculous invention of humane curiosity.

2. Reflexively, when men gibe and jeer the faithful messengers of God,

* Pet. 1st.

* *Apaga istas nugas de Christi, Poet. Med. hist. Eccles.*

God, 2 Chron. 36. 16. but they mocked the messengers of God; to mock the messengers of God is by reflection to mock the God of those messengers. *Cum multis aliis.*

3. Interpretatively, when men do such actions as plainly evidence a mockage of God. I have read of a fellow in want, that earnestly intreated *Mercury* to send him some relief, promising him that whatever he found he would sacrifice half to him, he found nuts, he eat the kernels and offered the shells to *Mercury*, which he resented as an high affront; activity in duty is the Kernel, sloth is the shell, which we offering to God in service is interpreted a high and horrid mocking. *Augustus Caesar* being invited to one of his subjects houses, and being slothfully and negligently entertained took it as a derision. Duty is an inviting God to our house, if we entertain him sluggishly and carelessly he will call you to an account for your impudent familiarity with him, and make you hold up your hand at his bar for being guilty of taking his name in vain. *Exod. 20. 7.*

*Nescibam me
tibi tam facile
famularem.
Eratum. Adv.*

X. Consider how active Christ was in doing us service, he did *commovere lapidem*; He was so enlarged about the thoughts of doing the work, that he was straitned until he was about it. *Luk. 22. 50. I have a baptism to be baptized with, & how am I straitned until it be accomplished, i. e.* I have a death of the Cross to suffer for Mans Redemption, and I am pressed with an *Antiperistasis* until I have finished it. Or else, as *Grotius* renders it, I am with child of my Passion, and how do I long for my delivery. I am in pain until I am in pain, much like some women, who breed their children with more pain than they do bring them forth. When that day of his travel came, it was the day of his triumph, *Col. 2. 15. Triumphant over them in it.* The *Athenian Cædus* being informed by the Oracle, That the People, whose King should be slain in the Battel, should be Conquerors, disrobed himself, went into the Enemies Quarters in the habit of a poor man, with a burden on his back, that he might steal a death to make his People Conquerours: Christ disrobed himself of the Garments of Glory, assumed the form of a servant, endured contradictions of sinners, held his peace when falsely charged, that he might steal a death for his People, that so they might be more then Conquerors. *Heb. 12. 2. Looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.* Shall Christ give you such a Copy of activity, and will you blot and blur it with sloth and sluggishness? shall Christ go swiftly to death? and we go sluggishly to duty.

Plutarch:

10 Beg the quickning Spirit, this is *inftar omnium*, none like it, as *David*

Tcc

vid

vid said of *Goliath's sword*. Sloth is the Kings Evil of the soul, & none but the King of Heaven can cure it by his hand, which is his Spirit, *Pf. 119. 32. I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.* Idleness is the souls-prison, sloth is her shackle, the spirit of God only can knock off her fetters, & give Goal-delivery to her, *Rom. 8. 26. The Spirit helpeth our infirmities,* of ignorance, dulness, deadness, sluggishness, & enables, yea ennobles us with gracious, copious, filial affections, even groans & sighs that are unutterable, expressions not to be expressed. *Cant. 1. 4. Draw me, and I will follow thee,* there is her Prayer, and her promise, and there is no doubt of her performance; she will as certainly follow as the Iron the Load-stone, or the Card the North pole, *Cant. 4. 16. Awake O North-wind, and come, O South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out.* Awake and come, there is the Prayer, O North and South wind; there is the Spirit, the soul that is the Garden, gracious affections they are the Spices that flow out.

Quest.

But some precious Soul whispers in mine ears (*I blest God*) I am not troubled with this lethargy, my sails are so filled, that my mill goes and grinds nimble, only I am afraid the wind blows not from the right quarter: pray therefore satisfy my conscience in this case, whether my activity in duty proceed from the Spirit of God?

Ans.

We may easily be deceived by our enlargements, because there are many winds and gales blowing from several quarters, w^{ch} may set the soul in active going and doing; as popular applause, high opinions of the Preacher, taking expressions in prayer, flourishing novelties & notions in a Sermon, satanical infusions, common & ordinary inspirations of the Holy Ghost, vouchsafed to reprobates, *Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.* All which or any of which may so draw and delight the heart, that (as *Orpheus* pipe) they or it may make the heart dance in a duty, and yet for all this, it may be possible, yea probable, the heart may dance after the Devils pipe, *Ezek. 33. 32.* the resolution of this case would have been fitter for some ancient, experienced Master of Assemblies, (whose Bible is more in his heart, than head, than for so weak and worthless a person as I am, who may truly say with *Agur*, *אֲנִי עֲרִיב וְאֵין חָכְמָה*, *Prov. 30. 2.* Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. Yet seeing Providence hath laid the lot at my door, to use *Peters* words a little altered, *Acts 3. 5.* Though silver and golden experiences and expressions I have none, yet such as I have I shall willingly impart and communicate to you. If you will lend me your patience, I will give you my pains in resolving this weighty and worthy case of Conscience, how a Christian may know, whether his activity in duty be from the Spirit of God.

I shall

I shall commend to you these eight Characteristical Notes as so many Touch-stones.

1. When we have beforehand earnestly prayed and prepared our souls for such activity, when you say & do to your soul, as *Jehu* did to the worshippers of *Baal*, 2 *Kin.* 10. 19. I have a great Sacrifice to offer O my soul, wara and summon in all the power, and parts of soul and body, be sure that not one be wanting, and so by reading, meditating and Prayer get our souls into a holy frame and gracious posture, & humbly, yea heartily also beg and beseech of God, to carry us on Eagles wings through the duty we are drawing near to, if we mount and soar aloft as (*Aquila in nubibus*) Eagles to Heaven in that duty, we may safely & surely conclude that activity is from the Spirit. When Mariners buy a wind of the Witches (as they do in *Lapland* and other places) and they have it at every place and point, according to the purchase of the one, and the promise of the other, they may undoubtedly conclude that wind came from the spirit of the Devil. When we beg a wind from God and we enjoy it at the time according to our desire, we may upon good ground say, that wind came from the Spirit of God; this will appear very clear if you please to lay together these four things.

1. It is Gods Prerogative to hear Prayer, *Psal.* 65. 2. *Oh thou that hearest Prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.*

2. It is Gods Promise to hear Prayer, *Pf.* 81. 10. *Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it; spread thy sails by Prayer, and I will fill them by my Spirit, Luke* 11. 13. *He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask it.*

3. It is Gods usual course to perform his promise, *as it is said*, in that very kind, *Psal.* 10. 17. *Lord thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear. I said not to the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain, Isa.* 45. 19.

4. It hath been the constant practise of Gods people to look after their Prayers, to see what success they have had. Prayers come not out of the Ark of their souls, as the Raven did, never to return, but as *Noahs* Dove, to come back again with an Olive branch into the soul, *Psa.* 85. 8. *I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints.* Saints do not shoot the arrows of their Prayers as children do, shoot them away and never mind them, but as Archers that shoot their arrows up at a Bird, and stand expecting their returns down again; if our activity come from the return of prayers, it must be from the Spirit. When *Elias* prays so fervently, that fire might come down from Heaven, and consume the sacrifice, and it did so, the people might justly cry out, *the Lord he is God, the*

Lord be is God, 1 Kings 18. 37, 39. So when we pray for fire and fervour to come down from Heaven on our service, and it comes, we may cry, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of God?

2. When our activity carries us *supra sphaeram activitatis*, above the reach of any creature; when dust is carried up on high the wind does it, when dust and ashes are carried up on high in a duty, the wind of the Spirit does it; If a Chymist dissolves a stone into drops of water, we may be sure some help higher than a creature hath helped him: If a heart of stone shall be dissolved into drops of water in a duty, it must be some help higher than a creatures must do it? if *Ganymedes* be carried up to heaven, it must be by the help of *Jupiter*; if the soul be carried up to Heaven so in a duty (that an extasie rather than an activity) it is by the help of the Spirit; if our spirit carries in a duty with sighs and groans that are unutterable, it was enabled by the Spirit of God, *Rom. 8. 26.* when we are carried through difficulties, doubts, duties, dangers, that seem impossible, impassible, by reason of the Lyons in the way, and the Lyons in the streets, that stand open-mouthed to devour us, *Pro. 26. 13.* Then to venture through all, fire, fury, faggot, this is of the Spirit of God: When *Daniel* shall continue active in Prayer three times a day, with his windows open, that all might see him, when there were Lyons in the way indeed, *Dan. 6. 10.* When *Luther* in outward streights shall have such inward enlargements that he comes off from his knees with a *victoria*, *victoria*. When he shall go to *Worms* to own the truth of Christ, though all the tiles upon the houses were devils. Of these Prayers, and Practices, and such like, we may say, as *Prologues* of a curious Line, none but *Apes* could draw this, none but the Spirit of God could enlarge and enable to do this.

3. When we feel and find our hearts after duty filled and straightened with spiritual joys, and heavenly comforts when our Soul is like a Merchants ship returned from the *Indies* laden as deep as it can swim, with all variety of Spices, and precious Commodities, When we have such inward ravishings that our heart is a little heaven, fill'd up to the brim with joy, as our saviour prayed for us, *Joh. 15. 11.* Enjoying that joy unspeakable and full of glory, *1 Per. 1. 8.* Heaven anticipated, or Heaven before-hand; when we have that joy which is the earnest of Gods love, *1 Cor. 2. 9, 10.* Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared (in this life) for them that love him; but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit. This joy is not only the fulfilling of Christs Prayer, but also the fruit of the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 22.* When the King had brought his spouse into his Bride-chamber after her

Slidan.

her prayer, he ravishes her heart with joy, *Cant. 1:4*. When David had been at prayer, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon me*. Then comes that rapture, *I have put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their Corn, and Wine, and Oyl increased*, *Pl. 4:6, 7*. When we have greater joy after duty than Worldlings have after Harvest, which is their greatest joy, *gaudium messis*, is *messis gaudii*; The joy of their harvest is all the harvest of their joy, which this Worlds Earth-worms are likely to enjoy, *Luk. 16:24*. *So, remember that thou in thy life-time receivest thy good things*, says *Abraham to Dives*.

4. When our activity in duty is constant, like the motion of the fire in its Orb (which Philosophers tell us) is perpetual. *My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times*, *Pl. 119:20*. The Spirit dwells in us as his Temple, *1 Cor. 6:19*. The body is the Temple, the Soul the Lute, the affections the Strings, the Holy Ghost the Musician, who in all our duties makes melody in our hearts, *Eph. 5:19*. Where the Ship is always sailing, the wind is always blowing, and we are sure that sailing comes from the Wind; if the wind lies still, the Ship lies still, is becalmed, *1 Cor. 3:17*. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, *Gal. 5:1*. Liberty and freedom are opposed to three things.

1. Necessity. 2. Co-action. 3. Restraint. Now the Spirit of God sets our heels (as it were) at liberty, not only from necessity, co-action, but also restraint. Setting at liberty is freeing us from imprisonment, and giving freedom to go whither we will. The Spirit admits us to that liberty which is 1. The purchase of Christ, *Gal. 5:1*. 2. The privilege of our filiation, *Rom. 8:21*. *The glorious liberty of the Sons of God*; The Spirit makes us act as itself. *Nescit servare vultum* *1 Pet. 1:12*. *The Spirit quickeneth* *Rom. 8:2*. As the spirit of life frees us from the law of sin and death, so from the Law of flesh and deadness.

Object. But some poor soul cries out, *Wee is me, I am undone, I find none of this Spirit in me. I am none of those fixed Stars above*, but a *Comet*, that move many Millions in an hour, but a *slow-paced Planet*, that finishes not his course in many years, whose motion is so dull that not discernable. Sure I am cast out of the firmament of Gods favour, and shall be a wandering Star, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever, *Jude vers. 13*.

Answer. It is the misery of Ministers, that they cannot speak of the experimental sublimities of some, but others are presently desponding and despairing. I would not for a world quench the smoking flax, or break the bruised reed, *Mat. 12:20*. Yea, I would with all my soul put

Per nomen libertatis non tantum intelligo a peccati & carnis servitutem, sed etiam fiduciam quam concipimus ex testimonio, venit cum Rom. 8. 15. Calv. in 2 Cor. 2. 7.

put the lambs in my bosom which cannot go, or but slowly, and gently lead them that are with young, *Isa. 40. 11.* I speak this to them that are upon the staves of *Jacobs Ladder* in their ascending to heaven, to be a loadstone to draw them up, not a millstone to drag them down. But to answer more appositely.

1. I intend it in opposition to them who live in a course of sin, yet now and then in a duty to feel a flash of joy, and thereupon presume of their good estate, and not to those who with *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God blameless, *Luk. 1. 7.* and yet do not obtain this constant favour.

2. I lay it down a positive sign and *inclusive*, that those and all those that have constant activities, (though differing for the altitudes and degrees) may be certain of the Spirit, as those that have Trade-winds from Port to Port may be sure they sail by the wind; or as those that have the Organ, *medium*, and object rightly disposed, may be sure they see, *Bellarmino* tells a story of an old man, that always arose from duty with these words, * *Be you fast, O my eyes, be fast for I shall never behold any fairer Object than Gods face, which I have now beheld.* But not a negative sign *exclusive*, as if those (that repent of sin, meditate on the Promises, pour out Prayers, walk with God, wait on Ordinances,) who have it not, were cast away. I am confident that many that lye wind-bound in the harbour shall in due time get to the Haven.

3. There are four things belong to a Christian: 1. A habit. 2. An Act. 3. Degree of that Act. 4. Sense of all these. He may have the three first, and yet want the sense of them, A ship may sail, and yet the Mariner not sensible of it.

4. There is no Rule but hath some Exception, no Experience in one Believers heart but a contrary experience may be found in anothers. Various are the workings of Gods Spirit in the heart, he blows when, where, how he pleases, *Joh. 3. 8.* He is called *seven spirits*, *Rev. 1. 4.* because of his various influences. He doth, *Eccl. 1. 12.* blow in a duty, if the ship be ready, but to shew he is *agens liberum*, he will sometime suspend his Act, and leave the common Road. To conclude this, take this counsel; *Stay thy self upon thy God*, *Isa. 50. 10.* Remembering he will send forth judgment unto victory, *Mat. 12. 20.* And take this for a cordial, which is a spiritual Riddle, *It is a comfort to have no comfort*; The desires of some are as acceptable to God, as the deeds of others.

When we are enlarged, and yet we are not elated; high in Gods Spirit, low in our own spirit. True Christians are like Canes, the fuller they are of Sugar, the lower they bend. *Quanto sublimior, tanto sub-*

missior;

* *Claudimini oculi mei, claudimini: nihil enim pulchrius jam videbitis.*

I may truly say
say of it as
Kocher
says of Mer-
curies motion,
*Vultu variis
et mox a ex
parte integritus*

missor: The loftier, the lowlier. Every true Saints Motto: True activity is not leaven to puff us up, but Lead to pull us down. What *Bede* wished some to observe of *Anselm* the Monk, sent over a Legate from the Pope to his Brethren the Prelates and Bishops of England, I may advise you to observe, that if he carried himself humbly he came from the Lord; high in duty, and humble after duty comes from the Lord. When *David* and his people had been on the Mount in their offerings to the building of the Temple; see what a low Valley they are in the opinion of themselves, *1 Chron. 29. 14. Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? — For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. Here is no haughty Pharisee, who has I? But an humble Publican, who am I?*

6. When activity in duty is expressed in activity in doing; when active prayers are turned into active sacrifices. The Emperor *Sigismund* having made fair Promises in a sore fit of sickness of amendment of life, asked *Theodorus*, Archbishop of *Colen*, how he might know, whether his repentance were sincere: Who replied, if you are as careful to perform in your health; as you are forward to promise in your sickness, *1 Pet. 2. 2. As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby. When our being high in duty makes us grow high in grace and knowledge, 2 Pet. 3. 18. Even as Cedars of Lebanon, until (caput inter nubila) we lodge our heads in heaven, 2 Pet. 1. 19, 11. We may be sure it is from the Spirit when enlargement in duty, lays on us an engagement to duty.*

7. When we give God the glory of all our Actions and activities, if it be returned to his praise, it was received from his Spirit. *When Rivers return to the Sea, it argues they from thence proceeded, Eccles. 1. 7. When David and his people had shewed their activity in their Presents towards the erecting of the Temple, they shut up all with a most gracious and grateful Doxology, 1 Chron. 29. 13. Now this is for our God; we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. Psal. 113. 1. Not unto us, O Lord; not unto us but unto thy name give the glory. He doubles now nobis, to lay down man, to lift up God. When we unfeignedly give God the glory, God hath undoubtedly given us the grace.*

8. When we have the testimony of the Spirit witnessing with our spirit that this activity is from himself, *Gall. 4. 6. God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. When we are so enlarged in a duty that we do cry, Abba, Father, this the Spirit witnesses is his work. The Spirit doth not witness by a clear and distinct, either outward or inward voice, totidem verbis, this I have wrought in thee;*

Anc. Syl. li. 2. Com. Promissives sunt humiliter promittendo quoniam dequantur. Dion. l. 38.

thee, thus to affirm, would be a Quakers fancy, or rather folly: But the Spirit doth sweetly and secretly suggest to us by having wrought those filial affections, and child-like dispositions of Love, Joy, Peace, Hope, Fear, Grief, Confidence, &c. in the heart, and by enabling us to act these gracious dispositions, as need shall require. This is the Spirit *μαρτυρῶν*, witnessing with our spirits, thus fitted and filled with peace and purity, with melting and mourning; the Spirit doth by his impress and impulse ratifie and seal the witness of our own Spirit to make it authentick, *Rom. 8. 15, 16. You have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit is self beareth witness with our spirits*; so that having two witnesses it may be established.

1. The witness of conscience, which is *miles testis*, 2. Cor. 1. 12. *But our rejoicing is this; the testimony of our conscience.*

2. The witness of the Spirit, which is more than ten thousand Witnesses, because he is infallible Witness, that cannot erre, therefore call'd the Spirit of Truth, 1 Joh 5. 6. Now these two putting their hands to the testimonial of our activity, breed and beget that *μαρτυρῶν μετὰ τῶν πνευμάτων*, 1 Joh. 3. 20. That Confidence in God, and Evidence to God, as *A. Lapide* interprets the the word: Now as those two Witnesses testimony in prophecy against Idolatrous and Superstitious Worship was sufficient to evidence all their actions were from the Spirit of Antichrist, *Rev. 11. 3.* So these two Witnesses testifying to our souls that these activities are legitimate and laudible; are sufficient assurance that they came from the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

Use 1.

Makes an Apology for those precious souls, whose wings are so besmeared with the bird-lime of Sloth; that they are forced to put up their humble Bills to Ministers and Congregations to beg of God in their behalf spiritual quicknings; that so their hearts being enlarged, by the breathings of the Spirit, they may bowzingly sail in the ways, and through the waves of Gods commandments.

Use 2.

Makes an Advocate to plead Justification to the Action in the behalf of those, who as they make it a Case of Conscience, so they make Conscience of the Case to bring their Activities to the Touchstone, and to the Tryal. They know that all is not Gold that glisters, and they would not (in a thing of that eternal concernment) be deceived with Alchimy instead of Gold, with blear-eyed *Leah* instead of beautiful *Rachel*, with a Cloud instead of *Juno*; with a Pebble instead of a Pearl; and therefore they are industrious and illustrious to try, whether their Activity in duty be from the Spirit, by those spirits that are ingredients into their Activity.

Wherein



Wherein are we endangered by things lawfull?

Luke 17. 27, 28.

They did eat, they drank, they married, &c.



Here is set down what the generality of people were doing in the world, they were brutish in the days of *Noah* before the flood came & drowned them; and in the days of *Lot* before the fire came down from Heaven and destroyed them. In *Mat. c. 24. 38.* it is expressed by participles, *they were eating, &c. τρώοντες, &c.* this shews the vigour and activity of their spirits spent on those things in which they were engaged, and the word *τρώοντες* proprie de brutis dici volunt Grammatici, ut etiam videatur magna esse huius verbi emphasis, qua significatur homines brutorum instar fere ventri deditos. Beza. This word signifieth a kind of brutish feeding themselves without fear, as it is *Jude 12.* but here in the Text the words run ἡδίων ἐμνον ἐζαυτοῖς, &c. They are expressed by an αὐτοῖς without a copulative, *Camerarius* observes, *hæc ita αὐτοῖς, petita magis notant & arguunt hominum temporis illius securitatem*: so that the vehemency, and eagerness, and intention of their spirits in the things they were implied in is hereby noted: They were very busie, their hearts, and heads, and hands, all taken up in eating, drinking, buying, selling, &c. the actions named, and the comforts which they were enjoying, those natural and civil implications in which they were engaged, all good and lawfull in themselves, but they were not well implied in them; the use of those things was lawfull, but they did sinfully use them: for there is in all these actions a narrow way and a broad way, *Matth. 21. 13, 14.* the narrow way which is bounded and limited, and under a rule as to the

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end,

and, 1 Cor. 10. 31. viz. the glory of God, and also to the circumstances, this there be but few that find it: but the broad way, which is without bounds and limits, this is the common road which most walk in. Thus far, but no further, saith God; the will of God is the boundary of the narrow way, but lust knoweth no bounds, and will not be prescribed to.

The very heathens looked at their common actions as under bounds; they had their *Αἵμα καὶ ἀνῆμα*, *sustine & abstine*, *ἐμμενῆν καὶ ἀρεσθῆν*. Gelli. Noſtes, l. 7. c. 19 Anton. Pig l. 4. § 3. but the difficulty lies in observing the just limits in the use of lawfull things; and therefore one said well, *Licitia perimunt omnes*, &c. ruine usually ariseth from the use of lawfull things, there being most danger where it is least suspected. In all our comforts there is a forbidden fruit, which seemeth fair, and tasteth sweet, but which must not be touched.

The Observations may be these:

1. That all our actions naturall, in eating, &c. and civill, in buying and selling, &c. come under a rule, This is implied, else the Lord would not have brought those great judgments on them, barely for their eating, &c. had they not in those employments transgressed a rule.

2. Such are usually the miscarriages of men in the use of lawfull things, that they are the procuring causes of the most dreadfull judgments. For we see that the Lord makes mention of these very things lawfull in themselves, as the causes of the flood on the world, and fire on Sodom.

3. The Lord puts great weight and stress on those very things which we take but little or no notice of. The old world and Sodom, little thought they should come to so severe a reckoning for their eating and drinking, &c.

To bring things to an issue as to the case concerning our danger of sin and miscarriage in lawfull things; I shall 1. inquire *when lawfull things become sin to us*. 2. *How we may judge of our hearts and selves, and discern their miscarriage and sin in the pursuing, injoyment and use of lawfull things*? 3. *What are the sins that attend the immoderate and inordinate use of lawfull things*?

As to the first I answer, *when lawfull comforts which are given us for helps, become hinderances in our way to Heaven, then they become sin to us*. When we by our abusive cleaving to the creature, by our inordinate affection to it, by our exorbitant disorderly pursuing of it, do abuse our helps, they become hinderances to us, and as it was said of Gideons Ephod, *Judg. 8. 27. He made an Ephod, which when*

when it became an Idol, became a snare. When lawful comforts are immoderately and passionately desired, pursued enjoyed, then they become an Idol and a beloved, or at least they become beloved so far as to carry it from Christ, from duty: Now when any thing becomes an Idol in the heart, so as that the soul begins to bow before it and yield obedience to it, then it becomes an Idol, and what is an Idol in the heart, is a stumbling block of iniquity in our life, *Ezek. 14. 4.* it is a stumbling block an hindrance in our way: such Idols in the heart, usually prove great offences, and both *συνδουλὸν καὶ περιστάμα*, stumbling blocks and occasions of falling; the first signifies a stumbling block to keep one off from duty; such an offence *Peter* was to Christ, *Matth. 19. 23.* He would have hindred him in that great work which He had to do. The second signifies a gall trap which will vex and trouble one in duty: so that when our comforts become Idols, images of jealousy in our hearts, then they are stumbling blocks, and so obstacles in our way to Heaven.

Again, when our lawful comforts by our dotage become beloveds, or greatly, passionately beloved, then they become hindrances; when your hearts inflame themselves with your comforts, as the Lord speaks of them, *Isa. 37. 3.* *They inflamed themselves with their Idols*; when the heart doth inordinateely love creature comforts, they are then turned into lusts, so that of lawful comforts they are made unlawful lusts, *1 Job. 2. 15, 16.* the things of the world, or the profits, pleasures, honours which usually mens hearts and thoughts are taken up withall, are good and lawful things in themselves, but being abused, they are called, *the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, &c.* The Holy Ghost puts the lust that is within us, to express the profits, pleasures and honours of the world which are without us. So that the good things of this life, by our inordinate love to them being abused, the very nature and property of the things are altered, for instead of proving good helps to us when lawfully loved and used, become lusts that hinder us, for they fight against our souls, *2 Pet. 2. 11.* and members of the old man, and weapon in his hand to fight against God; they become one with old *Adam* in us, and therefore *Col. 3. 5.* we are bid to mortifie our earthly members; he doth not say, mortifie your lusts, but members, they being all one, and make up together a body of sin, one old man, as it is called *Eph. 4. 22.* Now it is certain that the old man in us, the body of sin, is an enemy and a hindrance to us in our way to Heaven.

In this case those foul sins of Idolatry and adultery are committed

with the creature, in both which sins the heart is stolen away from God, drawn away from the proper object. The Apostle useth that expression *1 Am. 1. 14.* ἀπορτίς ἐκδοῦναις ἰδωλῶν ἁπλῶς, drawn away by lust, or some object, in an unlawful conjunction with the heart, then the heart comes to be glued to it, as God speaks, *Hos. 4. 17.* They are joyned to Idols, fixed to them, so that as in Idolatry the heart is joyned to and fixed to the Idol, so as that it will not easily part with it, as it is *Jer. 2. 10.* Has a nation changed its God, *q. d.* no they are fixed to their Gods and they will not change them. So it is in the sin of adultery, the heart is stolen from the proper object; as it is *Hos. 4. 11.* speaking of wine and women, it is said *they steal away the heart*, and it is glued to that which it goes awhoring after, so that it will not be taken off from it, *Prov. 2. 9.* When the creature becomes an Idol in the heart, then there is idolatry committed; and when it is a beloved there is adultery committed, the hope, and trust, and confidence of the soul is gone, the love and care, the joy and delight of the soul is gone, and the soul with every creature that it thus enjoys powreth out her fornications, as the Lord spake of them *Ezek. 16. 5.* and as they *Isa. 23. 17.* are said to commit fornication with all Kingdoms, so a heart which inordinately loveth, and doteth on, and is glued to creature comforts, recommitts fornication and abomination with them.

The second Inquiry was, *How we may judge of our hearts, and know when they miscarry and offend in the pursuing, use and enjoyment of lawfull things?*

1. When our desire of, and our endeavours after worldly things grow strong and impatient, and very eager and impatient; as *Rachel* said, *Give me children or else I die*, *Gen. 30. 1.* When we begin to say, I must have such an accommodation whatever it cost me, I must have such a comfort or I am undone: such a pursuit after worldly comforts, argues a heart very carnal; and he that miscarries so much in seeking after the things of this world, will not mend the matter much when he comes to enjoy them: when the heart groweth sick after worldly things in the desire of them, usually it surfeiteth when it gaineth it: as *Amnon* was sick for his sister, *2 Sam. 13. 1, 2.* he had a surfeit after: and as *Ahab*, *1 King. 21. 4.* he was sick with impatient earnest longing for *Naboths* vineyard. When your heart is very impatient till you do obtain your desires, you are never well with that thing which you do so obtain: When the affections grow strong and warm, that you can indure no opposition or contradiction in the pursuance

suance of your desires, but you can bear any trouble or hardship that you may obtain the things desired, as we see in *Shechem*, Gen. 34. who could endure circumcision that he might have *Dinab*; and in *Jacob*, who did indure very much that he might have *Rachel*, Gen. 29. 18. then there is a match towards, then in such a case when it is gained, the heart becomes glued to it, and commits fornication with it, and cannot indure to be touched or thwarted in the fruition of it; as *Demetrius* and the Silver-smiths, when they found their *Diana* began to be touched by *Pauls* doctrine, *Acts* 19. 24, 25, &c. they made an uproar, they would not endure that. When ye look on any thing with a greedy and impatient, longing, lusting eye, that, if you do obtain it (if God doth not otherwise order it) will drive a snare to you, as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal.* 69. 22. an Idol, an image of jealousy, a curse and a cross.

2. When you have raised expectations and hopes of great contentment and satisfaction from your comforts: when you promise to your selves greater matters from the creature than it can yield, then you miscarry when you look on the creature through the multiplying glass of your affections and lusts, and see them as they are so represented bigger and better than they are, and from thence you have high valuation of them, and raised expectations also of great things from them: when we fancy an excellency in the creature that is not, we fancy a fullness in an empty thing, a satisfaction in an insufficient, unsatisfying comfort, we fancy a stability in a vain, fleeting, vanishing thing: when we fancy a fountain excellency in a broken cistern, as they did *Jer.* 2. 13. then upon this the heart is raised to great expectations of pleasure, profit, &c. then the heart shamefully miscarries, and as it is said *Rev.* 13. 3, 4. there is a strange beast that turned the eyes of all the world after it; they looked with an eye of great expectation from this beast, and then they wondred and adored also; so that they looked with an eye of admiration and adoration too.

3. When the obedience and willing submission of the soul is brought off to any worldly comfort, and the soul stoops to its scepter, and the faculties like the Centurions servants do as they are bid, such comforts which are slavishly obeyed are sinfully enjoyed. When we are afraid to displease them the fear is at command, when we are careful to please such a lust, then the care is under subjection; when we are troubled if crossed, then our sorrow is at command; if rejoiced when that is gratified, then the love and delight of the soul
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are at command; *And his servants ye are to whom ye obey*, Rom. 6. 16. When the soul is even as the servant that looks to the hand of the Master with an obediential eye, *Psal. 123. 2.* expecting a command, and ready to yield obedience, such a comfort is a sin and a curse to you. Christ calls to us to deny our selves, *Matth. 16. 24.* Profits, pleasures, carnal advantages say, rather deny Christs command: Who is obeyed? Christ saith *mortifie your lusts*; lust saith gratifie me, consider who is obeyed? If family duties, and personal private duties; if praying, holy meditation, secret close communion with God be neglected, because multitude of worldly business and full and great Trade in the world commands you another way, and requires the love, and zeal, and strength, and care of the heart to another attendance, then you are under another Sovereign than Christ. The obedience of the heart is carried to another Law, *other Lords rule over you.* Now the soul that is under the command of the creature, as I have shewed, that comfort becomes a sin which usurps the throne of the heart.

4. When the soul groweth very tender and compassionate towards such a comfort, and begins to spare that above other things, then that becomes a lust, and lust is very tender and delicate, and must be tenderly used: right eyes are very tender, the least touch fetcheth tears; when thou canst not endure that either the Word of God, or the Rod of God should come too near, or so much as touch upon such a carnal contentment, such a comfort, such a Husband, such a Wife or Child, thou canst not endure that the Lord should smite thee in any of these: but thou cryest out, *Oh spare this*, as David concerning his *Absalom*; *2 Sam. 18. 4, 5.* *Oh tender the young man, pray deal gently with him*; and as old *Jacob* with his *Benjamin*, *He could more easily spare his other children than him, he looked with a very tender compassionate eye on him.* What ever thou dost enjoy with such a tender bleeding heart and eye, it hath ravished thy heart very far, and it is become thy Idol, and beloved very far, and thy sin.

5. When the care, anxiety, and solicitude of the soul runs out after the comforts of this life, saying, what shall I eat, what shall I drink, how shall I live and maintain my Wife and Children, what shall I do to get, to keep such or such a thing? when the thoughts of the heart are taken up for protection, for provision, to get and hold the things of this life; such comforts as are so gotten, and so enjoyed, they are finfully obtained and maintained, and this our
Lord

Lord Christ doth clear to us, *Mat. 6. 25, 26.* And he warns his Disciples in a special manner against all such cares, *Luk. 22. 34.*
οὐκ ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή σου ἡτιςτιν

6. That comfort which thou art not dead unto, neither is that dead to thee, thou wilt hardly enjoy with safety to thy self, or thou wilt part withall but upon severe terms.

If when God by his providence calls for such or such a comfort, Husband, Wife, Child, yet thou canst not, you will not resign and give up that comfort at Gods call; but thou growest impatient and sullen, when he doth but attempt to bereave thee of it: God may perhaps let thee have thy lust, as he dealt with the *Israelites*, *Psal. 78. 18, 30.* but thou shalt have that comfort without any comfort, it may be with a curse:

When we cannot bear the thoughts of either absence or loss of such or such things, cannot endure the thought of parting: it is like the tearing off a limb from the body, when God takes away such a Husband, or Wife, or Child, or Estate, &c. It argues that they were greatly abused while we had them. If there were an indifferency of spirit in us, as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, &c.* That they that were married, were as if they were not married, &c. they would part upon easier terms by far. When the life is bound up in a comfort, it is death to part, *Gen. 44. 22, 30.* as it was with *Jacob* to his *Benjamin*. When the creature had got too great an interest in thee, that thou canst by no means bring thy heart to think of leaving it, or its leaving thee, though God seems to call for it, the heart begins secretly to rise up against God, and to murmur and quarrell at providence, this argueth a very carnal heart. If the heart did hang loose from these things, thou mightest enjoy them with more comfort, and part them with more ease.

7. If after God hath been weaning us in a more special manner by his Word and Rod, and taking off our hearts from our worldly comforts, yet the strong bent of the soul is towards them; it argues much carnal love to them, that we are not crucified to those comforts.

When the soul hath its secret sinfull converse and fellowship with a creature-comfort, against its own conviction to the contrary; it may be thou hast repented, or at least hast seemed to repent of such a way and course, yet for all this, thy heart continually hangs that way: and as it is, *Prov. 9. 17.* *Her stollen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant,* when a stollen glance of the eye, a stollen kiss

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from a lustful object is still pleasant to the soul, there is much of a meretricious carriage in that heart, it is so far sinfully enjoyed.

When the heart hankers much after such a thing, it is stoln away, *Hos. 4. 11.* when it hangs after it, as it is *Jer. 22. 17.* Their hearts went after their covetousness: when the heart hath its secret haunts and postern doors to get out to such or such an object, and that object hath its secret passage to the soul. There be some secret correspondencies betwixt the heart and the object, when the lustfull object hath its well-come, it no sooner knocks but it is admitted; when it hath a free passage into the heart, and the heart hangs after it, nay, perhaps admits it when it is in duty, if it comes even when we are with God in prayer and is admitted, it argues a sinfull whorish familiarity.

8. If after solemn and frequent warnings, invitations and earnest beseechings, perhaps corrections too, God calls thee to a more strict and close walking with him in a severer way of self-denial, in a more free and full enjoyment of himself; if God would sequester thee from thy Oxen, Farm, married Wife, that he might have thee more alone from the croud, and dust, and tumult of the world; if yet after all this, thou then settest thy wits on work to frame excuses: If Christ speak to thee as he did to his Spouse, *Cant. 7. 11.* Come let us go and lodge in the villages; Come let us go out of the City crowd and multiplicity of worldly busineses, and let us retire alone that we may more fully enjoy one another. If he saith to thee as *vers. 12.* he speaks to his Spouse, Let us get up early to the vineyard, &c. and calls thee off to a more early, earnest, diligent attendance on him, and thou doest as the Spouse, *Cant. 5. 2, 3.* makest lazy excuses, for thy easie gainfull trade and way of life thou ledest; if so it be with thee, thou keepst thy comforts upon sinfull terms.

When the Arguments, and pleas, and excuses, and pretexts are for lust, when denials, equivocations, and thy reason are all at work for lust. When God calls to self-denial in some creature-comfort, and then the heart forms excuses for the enjoyment of it, as they in the Gospel, they all began to make excuses, when they were call'd to the Wedding Supper; their lawfull comforts became a snare and sin to them, *Luke 14. 16, 17.* If thy heart in such a case studies colours to adorn or set it out, or set it off, or covers to protect it, then it is sinfull; the heart miscarries in the enjoyment of its comforts, when it studies how to hide it self in the enjoyment of it as much as may be even from the eye of God.

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The third thing propounded was, *What are the sins that attend the immoderate sinful use or abuse of lawful comforts?*

I will confine my self to the sins in the Text: The first sin in their eating and drinking, &c. was sensuality, and that is expressed by the word *τρυφῆς*, which as I have shewed, is properly applied to bruits, an eating after a bruitish manner, and by the *ἀνδρῶν*, which notes the vehemency and intention of their spirits, laid out in their sensual enjoyments, men are apt (especially in abundance) to grow sensual and bruitish, to use their comforts without fear, to indulge themselves very farre, and so say to themselves as the Rich Glutton, *Soul take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry*, Luk. 12. 19. a sensual bruitish speech, fitter for a Swine than a man; abundance of the things of this life hath a strange vertue to corrupt a man into a bruit. *Deut. 32. 15* *Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked*. How is he degenerated to a fat Heifer or Horse, that kicks and winseth? The Lord complains *Jer. 5. 7, 8.* that *when he fed them to the full they committed adultery*, &c. and were like *fed Horses* bruitish and sensual: such as gratifie their lusts in eating, &c. are strong *Bulls of Bashan*, *Psal. 22. 12.* the Psalmist sayes, he was compassed about with them who were like *Bulls* in a fat pasture, well fed and strong, and ready to gore and push: the great, and rich, and potent ones, are compared to these bruits: We are very apt in the midst of comforts to grow sensual, and before we are aware, as *Noah* and *Lot* who both were overtaken: Our Lord Christ *Luk. 11. 34.* exhorts his Disciples against these, and bids them to beware, the word notes a very diligent and intent study and intention of mind to what he said, least their heart should be overcharged; it seems strange that he should give the Disciples an exhortation against sensuality and bruitish sins, but that he knew their natures, and though they were most temperate persons, yet he bids them *beware of surfeiting*, knowing that if the best did not watch, they might be overtaken with sensuality.

2. Pride, ease and idleness usually go together, the immoderate or inordinate use of the creature, this was it which God warned his people of, *Deut. 8. 11, 12, 14.* *take heed when thou art full, &c. lest thy heart be lifted up*. So *Psal. 123. 4.* there 'tis said *his soul was filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud*: they are put together; When we fall to eating and drinking, the next thing is to take our ease, *Luk. 12. 19.*

So the Lord speaks *Hos. 13. 6.* *According to their pastures so were they filled, and their heart was exalted, and they have forgotten me.*

Ease and Idleness attend sensuality, these gratifie a brutish disposition very much, fulness of bread and abundance of idleness were *Sodoms* sins, *Ezek.* 16. 49. And the rich glutton sang a Requiem to his soul, usually when men abound in outward comforts they are most apt to grow lethargick and slothful, or at least they will not take much pains, it may be they will be doing something but they will not be at much pains especially as to their souls, *Hos.* 10. 11. *Ephraim is a Heifer that loveth to tread out the Corn*, &c. but not to plow, he cares not for that, they were wont to use Beasts in treading their Corn instead of threshing of it, now it was Gods command that the Oxe that trod out the Corn should not be muzzled but that he might eat as he did work.

Then here is *Ephraim* at a good lazy work that hath meat in the mouth of it, wages for work, and present pay, here is Corn, he abounds in outward things; and though he treads out the Corn, he will not plow, that is too hard labour, he will not go abroad in the wet and cold, and seems to have reference to those of the Tribes that would not go to *Jerusalem* to worship, they would not take so much pains: *Ephraim* considers his ease, he loves no hard work, *Ephraim* did abound and grew rich, *Hos.* 12. 7, 8. He drave a great trade in the world and took pains, but yet it was in a way that might gratifie his lust and carry on his gain, but what saith God to this temper, see *Hos.* 10. 11. The Lord saith he will pass upon his fair neck, I'll make *Ephraim* to ride: He had a fair and a beautiful neck, he led such a life, that though he trod out the Corn, he lived in plenty, ease, and idleness, no yoke came on his neck, he would not abide a yoke to be put on, but by his lazy life and good trade he had a beautiful neck, he became tender and delicate: but I'll pass over his fair neck (as some take it) I'll cause a heavy yoke to come over his neck. and will make him work and set him to hard labour, I'll make him a drudge. I'll make him ride, some take it for their speedy captivity that shall tame him, by his plenty and ease he is grown so lusty, like a restive Jade, I'll ride him; I'll set some on his back shalt ride him off his legs, and *Vers.* 12. *Jacob shall break the clods*, the ten Tribes, this is a base drudging work to break the clods, but this servile work shall be his. We see in *Laodicea* their plenty and idleness (*Rev.* 16. 17.) went together, and they were to be spewed out.

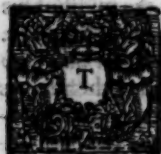
3. Then there is security follows this eating, &c. and usually where there is abundance of these, and that men are much taken up with

with these, there is a secure sleepy forgetful spirit goes with them: and doubtless this was the sin of the old world, that though *Noah* was a Preacher of righteousness, and his making the Ark was a publick alarm to the world, yet they went on in their way, eating and drinking, &c. very securely, promising to themselves peace and safety. Such as are filled with what they eat and drink, are apt to drop asleep, and then they are secure, they apprehend themselves safe from danger; they are compared to a drunken man, that doth not know in what condition he is, in 2 *Tim.* 2. 6. *ἀναισθητός*, the word is to return to ones self after drunkenness, that they may awaken: for it signifies one that is secure, and so goes on in his way, when he returns and recovers himself, he is as a man that was drunk; and awakes and returns to himself: whence it is that God did so often caution his people against a secure sleepy forgetful frame of spirit: and when the Lord was to bring the children of *Israel* into *Canaan*, he still bids them they should not forget him, *Deut.* 6 c. 8. v. 14. but this sin he complains of in them, *Hos.* 2. 13. When *David* was in the midst of his comforts he grew secure, *Psal.* 30. 6. We find some brought in *Isa.* 28. 15. speaking in their thoughts that they had made a covenant with death & hell, &c. they in their secure thoughts apprehended themselves free from danger, such thoughts ever carry impenitency and hardness of heart with them, *Zeph.* 1. 12. *Jer.* 48. 11. when they are settled on their lees, they never consider or say what have I done? *Jer.* 8. 6. Incogitancy and security go together, a secure person never considers his own estate, danger nor duty: When once a man grows sleepy, promising to himself freedom from danger and good days, then he falls into some sin or other, or some evil falls upon him, *Mat.* 24. 48. 50. The evil servant said his Master delayed his coming, and *Ver.* 49. He began to beat his fellow servant. 1. He is secure, he promisseth to himself safety, his Master delays, &c. 2. He falls to beat his fellow-servant: Or else they fall into some sin, *Mat.* 25. 5, 8. while they slept their Lamps went out, or some evil befalls them, *Lam.* 1. 9. Sudden destruction, 1 *Thes.* 5. 3. when men grow secure as to their state, and of a supine sleepy careless spirit, such are ever in a most unsafe, sinful condition nigh to cursing, and on the very brink of ruine and utter destruction.

How must we make Religion our business?

Luke 2. 49.

Wist ye not that I must be about my Fathers business.



Col. 2. 9.

*Usque ad sum-
mum percussit.
Budæus.*

*Minime objun-
gunt, sed rem-
fidenter & mo-
destè quærens.
Bægenus.*

John 5. 4.

Hese are the words of our Lord Jesus whose lips dropped as an hony-comb; the occasion was this; Christ having the spirit of wisdom and sanctity powred on him without measure, being but twelve years old, goes to the Temple, and fell a disputing with the Doctors, *verse 46.* where should Learning blossom but upon that Tree which did bear several sorts of fruit; Who could better interpret secrets, than he who lay in his Fathers bosom? *all that heard him were astonished at his understanding,* *vers. 47.* In the Greek it is *ἐξίσταται*, they were out of themselves with admiration: well might they admire, that he who never had been at the University should be able to silence the great Rabbies; *John 7. 15* *How knoweth this man letters having never learned?* while they were wondering, his Mother (who now was come to seek him,) propounds this question, *Son why hast thou thus dealt with us?* *vers. 48.* that is, why hast thou put us to all this labour in seeking thee? in the words of the Text Christ makes a rational and religious reply, *Wist ye not that I must be about my Fathers business?* in the Greek it is *ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρὸς μου, ἐν ταῖς πράξεσιν*, in the things of my Father. As if Christ had said, I must be doing the work which my Father in Heaven hath set me about, for this received I my mission and unction, that I might do the will of him that sent me; what am I in the World for, but to promote his glory, propagate his truth, and be as a load-Star to draw souls to Heaven? *Wist ye not that I must be about my Fathers business.*

From

From this example of our blessed Saviour in making his Fathers work *his business*, we learn this great Truth,

That it is the duty of every Christian to make Religion his business. Docr.

Religion is not a *deputy* or thing by the bye, proper only for spare hours, but it must be the grand business of our lives; St. Paul made it so, his great care was to *know* Christ, and to be *found* in Christ, *Phil.* 3. 9. 10. how abundantly did he lay out himself for God; *1 Cor.* 15. 10. *παραπορευομενος γνωσιας*, *I laboured more abundantly than they all*, &c. Saint Paul moved heavenward, not slowly as the Sun on the Dial, but as the Sun in its hemisphere with a winged swiftnes; he made Religion his business.

For the illustrating and unfolding of this, there are three Questions to be resolved,

1. What is meant by Religion.
2. Why we must make Religion our business.
3. What it is to make Religion our business.

1. What is meant by Religion? I answer, the Latine word *religio* Quest. 1.
quasi religatio, it signifies *a knitting together*; sin hath loosed us *La. 1. 1. 14*
from God, but when Religion comes unto the heart, it doth *re. div. instu.*
ligare, fasten the heart to God again; as the members are knit to the head by several nerves and ligaments: Religion is the spiritual finew and ligament that knits us to God. The Greek word for Religion *δωδευα*, signifies *a right worshipping*. This is Religion; when *Ab. 20, 7*
we not only worship the true God, but in that manner which he *απομαν.*
hath prescribed; by a right rule, from a right principle, to a right end.

2. The second Question is, Why we must make Religion our Quest. 2.
business? I answer, Because Religion is a matter of the highest nature; while we are serving God we are doing Angels work: the business of Religion doth infinitely out-balance all things besides; pleasure, profit, honour, (the Trinity which the world adores) are all of an inferior alloy, and must give way to Religion. The fear of God is said to be *the whole duty of man*, *Ecclef. 12. 13.* or as it is in the Hebrew *כל האדם* *the whole of man*: other things may delight, Religion doth satiate; other things may make us wise to admiration, Religion makes us *wise to salvation*, *2 Tim. 3. 15.*

3. The third Question is, What it is to make Religion our business? I answer: It consists principally in these seven things. Quest. 3.

1. We make Religion our business, when we wholly devote our selves to Religion: *Psal. 119. 38. Stablish thy word unto thy servant*
who

who is devoted to thy fear; as a Scholar who devotes himself to his studies makes Learning his business: a godly man may sometimes run himself through precipitancy, and incogitancy upon that which is evil; there's no man so bad but he may do some good actions, and there's no man so good but he may do some bad actions, but the course and tenour of a Godly mans Life is Religious; when he doth deviate to sinne, yet he doth devote himself to God. 'Tis with a Christian as it is with a company of mariners at sea, they are bound for such a coast, now while they are sailing they may meet with such a cross wind as may turn them back and drive them a quite contrary way, but as soon as the storm is over, and the sea calm, they recover themselves again, and get into the right way where they failed before; so it is with a Christian, Heaven is the haven he is bound for, the Scripture is the compass he sails by, yet a contrary wind of temptation blowing, he may be driven back into a sinful action, but he recovers himself again by repentance, and sails on constantly to the heavenly Port. This is to make Religion our business, when notwithstanding some excursions through humane frailty, we are devoted to Gods fear, and dedicate our selves to God.

Isa. 5. 20.

2. We make Religion our business, when we intend the business of Religion chiefly; it doth *principalem obtinere*; Matth. 6. 33. *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God.* First, in time before all things, and first, in affection, above all things. We must give Religion the pre-*cedency*, making all other things either *subservient*, or *subordinate* to it. We are to provide for our Families, but chiefly for our souls, this is to make Religion our business, *Jacob* put the cattle before, and made his wives and children lag after, *Gen.* 32. 16. 'Tis unworthy to make Religion come behind in the rear, it must lead the van, and all other things must stoop and vail to it: he never had Religion in his heart, who faith to any worldly thing, *in the throne thou shalt be greater.*

3. We make Religion our business, when our thoughts are most busied about Religion: while others are thinking how they shall do to get a living, our thoughts are, how we shall do to be saved: *David* did muse upon God, *Psal.* 139. 3. *While I was musing the fire burned.* Thoughts are as passengers in the soul, when we travel every day to the City of God, and are contemplating glory and eternity, this is to make Religion our business. *Theophilact* calls holy contemplation, the gate and portal by which we enter into Heaven; a Chri-

Si Christus pro
re de celesti
sede descendit,
tu propter ip-
sam fuge ter-
renam. Aug.

၁။ ဂိဗုဇ္ဇာနီမိ ခံ-
ဇာနီဝ် ဂိ ဝမ်-
တိန် ဂုဇ္ဇာနီ-
ဇာ ဂုဇ္ဇာနီ ဝမ်-
ဇာနီ. Theoph.

stian by divine soliloquies, and ejaculations, is in Heaven before his time; he is wraped up into Paradise, his thoughts are all pack'd up and gone.

4. We make Religion our business, when our main end, and scope is to serve God: he is said to make the World his business, whose great design is to get the World. St. Pauls ultimate end was, that Christ might be magnified, and the Church edified: our aimes must be good as well as our actions. Many make use of Religion for sinister ends; like the Eagle while she flies aloft her eye is upon her prey: Hypocrites serve God *propter aliud*; they love the Temple for the gold, they court the Gospel, not for its beauty, but for its Jewels: these do not make Religion their business, but a politick trick, and artifice to get money; but when we make Religion our business, when the glory of God is mainly in our eye, and the very purport and intent of our life is, to live to him who hath died for us 2 Cor. 5. 15. God is the center, and all the lines of our actions must be drawn to this center.

5. We make Religion our business, when we do trade with God every day. Phil. 3. 20. *Our conversation is in Heaven.* The Greek Word for conversation *παραίτημα*, signifies commerce and traffique: our merchandize is in Heaven: a man may live in one place, and drive his trade in another: a Saint though he lives in the world, yet he trades above the Moon, he is a merchant for the Pearl of price. This is to make Religion our business, when we keep an holy intercourse with God, there's a trade driven between us and Heaven, 1 Joh: 1. 3. *Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus;* God comes down to us upon the wing of his Spirit, and we go up to him upon the wing prayer.

6. We make Religion our business, when we redeem time from secular things for the service of God: a good Christian is the greatest monopolizer, he doth hoard up all the time he can for Religion, Psal. 119. 62. *at midnight will I rise and praise thee.* Those are the best hours which are spent with God, and David having tasted how sweet the Lord was, would borrow some time from his sleep, that he might take a turn in Heaven. It well becomes Christians to take time from wordly occasions, sinful dressings, idle visits, that they may be the more intent upon the matters of Religion. I have read of an holy man, who being tempted by his former evil companions to sin, he made this answer, I am so busie in reading in a little book with three leaves, that I have no leisure so much as to mind my other

other business; and being asked afterward, whether he had read over the book, replied, this book with three leaves are of three several colours, red, white, and black, which contain such deep mysteries, that I have resolved with my self to read therein all the days of my life; in the first leaf which is *red*, I meditate on the pretious blood of Christ which was shed for my sins; in the *white* leaf, I meditate on pure and delicious joyes of Heaven; in the *black* leaf I contemplate the hideous and dreadful torments of Hell, prepared for the wicked to all eternity. This is to make Religion our business, when we are so taken up with it, that we have scarce any leisure for other things. Christian, thou hast a God to serve, and a soul to save, and if thou hast any thing of Religion in thee, thou wilt take heed of the *thieves of time*, and wilt engross all opportunities for the best things. How far are they from Christianity, who juggle out holy duties, instead of borrowing time from the world for prayer, they steal time from prayer that they may follow the world.

7. We make Religion our business, when we serve God with all our might: our strength and spirits are drawn forth about Religion; we seek, sweat, strive, bestir our selves as in a matter of life and death, and put forth not only *diligence*, but *violence*, 2 Sam. 6. 14. *David danced before the Lord with all his might*: This is to make Religion our business, when we shake off sloth, and put on zeal as a garment. We must not only pray, but pray *fervently*, Jam. 5. 16. we must not only repent but be *zealous* and repent, Rev. 3. 9. we must not only love, but be *sick of love*, Cant. 2. 5.

Horat.

multa culis, sudavit, & alsit.

This is to be a Christian to purpose, when we put forth all our vigour and fervour in Religion, and take the Kingdom of God as it were by storm. 'Tis not a faint velleity will bring us to Heaven, there must not only be *wishing* but *working*, and we must so work, as being damned if we come short.

Use 1.

Information

Branch. 1.

Use 1. Information.
1. Branch. Hence learn, that there are but few good Christians; oh how few make Religion their business! is he an Artificer that never wrought in the trade? is he a Christian that never wrought in the trade of Godliness? How few make Religion their business!

1. Some make Religion a *complement*, but not their business; they court Religion by a *prission*, and if need be Religion shall have their letters of commendation, but they do not make Religion their

their business. Many of Christ's Disciples who said, *Lord overtake us on this bread*, yet soon after basely deserted Christ, and would follow him no longer. *John 6. 66. From that time many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him.* *John 6: 34*

2. Others make the world their business. *Phil. 3. 19. Whomind earthly things.* The earth puts out the fire. So the love of earthly things puts out the fire of heavenly affections. It was a judgement upon Korah and Dathan, *Numb. 16. 32. the earth swallowed them up.* Thus it is with many; the world swallows up their time, thoughts, discourse; they are swallowed up alive in the earth. There is a lawful use of these things, but the sin is in the excess. The Bee may suck a little honey from the leaf, but put it in a Barrel of honey, and it is drown'd. How many ingulph themselves in the creature, and drive such a Trade in the Shop, that they quite break in their Trading for Heaven. The Farm and Oxen have kept millions from Christ. These do not make Religion their business, but make the world their business; and what will all be at death, but as a dream, or fancy? *Hab. 2. 13. The people shall labour in the fire, and weary themselves for very vanity.* *Gal. 5: 22*

2. Branch. Hence see how hard it is to be saved! 'Tis not so easy as some apprehend, *Religion must be our business.* 'Tis not enough to have a smack of Religion, a touch and away, *Canis ad nilum*—but we must make it our business. How many precepts have we to obey, how many tentations to resist, how many graces to treasure up? Religion is the work of our whole lives, and all little enough; Lord then how hard is it to be saved? Where will the sinner appear? What will become of the Gallants of our times, who make sin their business, whose whole employment is to indulge and pamper the flesh? *quid dicitur mundus? quid dicitur?* All their care is (as Hierom speaks) to crisp their hair, to sparkle their Diamonds; in stead of steeping their souls in brinish tears, they bathe themselves in perfumed waters, and ride to Hell upon the back of pleasure. *Quibus cura est ut vestes bene oleant, ut digiti annulis radiant, ut crines calamistro rotentur. Hier.*

Use 2. Let us deal impartially with our own souls, and put our selves upon a strict trial before the Lord, whether we make Religion our business? And for our better progress herein, I shall lay down ten Signs and Characters of a man that makes Religion his business, and by these, as by a Gospel-Touchstone, we may try our selves.

1. He who makes Religion his business, doth not place his Religion only in externals. *Rom. 2. 28. He is not a Jew who is outwardly.*

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wardly.

1. *Paraphr.* *morally.* Religion doth not stand only in forms and shadows; this is to give God leaves instead of fruit. 'Tis often seen, that the pomp of worship destroys the purity, as the point of Glass hinders the light: And 'tis no untruth to say, that formality may as well damn as prophane. A superstitious Pharisee may as well be in Hell as a drunken Epicure. A Christians main work lies with his heart. He that makes Religion his business, gives God the *Veritas*, he worships him in spirit and in truth, *John 4. 24.* In stilling the spirits are strongest. The good Christian distills out the spirits for God. Aaron must offer the fat upon the Altar; *He shall offer an offering made by fire, the fat that covereth the inward.* *Nerl. 16.* All the fat is the Lords. If Aaron had offered the skin instead of the fat, it would not have been accepted. External devotion alone, is offering the skin; and they that give God only the skin of duty, shall carry away only the shell of comfort.

2. Character.

2. Character. He who makes Religion his business, avoids every thing that may be a remora and hindrance to him in his work. A wicked man cares not whether the matter of Religion goes forward or backward; he stands in the way of tentation; and as if sin did not come fast enough, he draws it as with a Cart-rope, *Ila. 5. 18.* But he who makes Religion his business, flies from tentation, and while he is running the heavenly race, lays aside every weight of sin which doth easily beset him. *Heb. 12. 1.* A man may as well miss of Heaven by loitering in the way, as by losing the way, *1 Sam. 21. 8.* The Kings business required haste; so the business of Religion requires haste; therefore the good Christian is careful that he be not taken off the work, and so be taken tardy in it.

3. Character.

3. Character. He who makes Religion his business, hath a care to preserve conscience inviolable, and had rather offend all the world than offend his conscience, *2 Tim. 1. 3.* I thank God whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience. Much of Religion lies in conscience. Faith is a precious Jewel but Conscience is the Cabinet where this Jewel must be kept, *1 Tim. 3. 9.* Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience. Love is a beautiful flower, but this flower most grows in the garden of a pure conscience, *1 Tim. 1. 5.* Charity out of a pure conscience. So sacred a thing is conscience, without this all Religion drops in pieces. He who makes Religion his business, labours to get conscience regulated by Scripture, (as the Watch is set by the Dial) and having done this, he keeps his conscience as his eye, that no dust of sin fall into it.

4. Character.

4. *Character.* He who makes Religion his business, Religion hath an influence upon all his civil actions.

1. Religion hath an influence upon his eating and drinking; he holds the golden bridle of temperance, he eats sparingly. The godly man feeds not to please the sensual appetite, but that he may (as *Chrysostome* saith) by the strength he receives from the creature be the more fit for the cheerful discharge of spiritual services. He makes not his food fuel for lust, but help to duty. Epicures dig their own grave with their teeth; they feed without fear, Jude vers. 12. *Irregulares gulares.* Sinners fear not lest their Table should be a snare; they fear not the process of justice; while the Wine is in the Cup, they fear not the hand missing on the Wall. But the godly man being regulated by Religion, puts a Knife to his throat, Prov. 23. 2. that he may cut the throat of intemperance.

2. He that makes Religion his business, Religion hath an influence upon his recreation. The strings of the Viol must sometimes be slackned lest they break; *Neque semper arcum tendit Apollo.* God affords his people generous delights; the Scripture allows the use of the Bow, 2 Sam. 1. 18. But we are apt to offend most in lawful things; more are killed with Wine than with poison. Religion sits Moderator in the soul. The man influenced by Religion dares not make play an occupation; 'tis oyl to quicken him in Gods service, not a Sea to ingulph him. He who is devoted to Religion, puts bounds to the Olympian sports; he knows where to make his stops and periods; he sets up an *Herculis Columna*, on which he writes, *non ultra, no further than this.*

3. He that makes Religion his business, Religion hath an influence upon his buying and selling. The wicked get a livelihood often by cozening; sometimes they embase commodities, *Amos 8. 6. They sell the refuse of the Wheat.* They would pick out the best grains of Corn, and then sell the rest; sometimes they falsifie their weights, *Hof. 12. 7. He is a Merchant, the ballances of deceit are in his hand.* But he who makes Religion his business, is regulated by it in the Shop; he is just in his dealings; he dares not hold the Book of God in one hand, and false weights in the other; he is faithful to his neighbour, and makes as much reckoning of the ten Commandments, as of his Creed.

4. Religion hath an influence upon his marrying. He labours to graft upon a religious stock; he is not so ambitious of parentage as

πῶς γυναικα πῆτι; nor is his care so much to espouse dowry as virtue. In a word, he seeks for a *meet help*, one that may help him up the hill to Heaven: this is marrying in the Lord. That marriage indeed is *honourable*, when the husband is joyned to one who is the *Temple of the holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 6. 19. Here is the man that makes Religion his business, who in all his civil transactions is *steered*, and influenced by Religion: Religion is the universal ingredient.

5. He who makes Religion his business, is good in his calling and relation; relative grace doth much grace Religion; I shall suspect his goodness who herein is *excentrical*: some will pray and discourse well, but it appears they never made Religion their business, but took it up rather *for ostentation* than as an *occupation*, because they are defective in relative duties: they are bad husbands, bad children, &c. If one should draw a picture, and leave out the eye, it would much eclipse and take from the beauty of the picture: to fail in a relation, stains the honour of profession. He who makes Religion his business, is like a *Star* shining in the proper orbe, and station wherein God hath set him.

6. He who makes Religion his business, hath a care of his company, he dares not twist into a cord of friendship with sinners; Psal. 26. 4. *I have not sat with vain persons*: Diamonds will not cement with rubbish. 'Tis dangerous to intermingle with the wicked, lest their breath prove infectious: Sin is very catching, Psal. 106. 35, 36. *They were mingled among the Heathen, and learned their works, and served their idols, which were a snare unto them.* *Arayūn tradū, and aradū: if you mingle bright and rusty armour together, the rusty will not be made bright, but the bright will be made rusty.* He who makes Religion his business, likes not to be near them, whose nearness sets him further off from God, and whose embraces, like those of the Spider, are to suck out the precious life: The godly man ingrafts into the communion of Saints; and hereby, as the Sions he partakes of the sap, and virtue of their grace: he who makes it his business to get to Heaven, associates only with those who may make him better, or whom he may make better.

7. He who makes Religion his business keeps his spiritual watch alwayes by him. 1. He watcheth his eye, Job. 31. 1. *I have made a covenant with mine eyes.* When Dinah was gadding she was defiled, Gen. 34. 1. When the eye is gadding by impure glances, the heart is defiled. 2. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his thoughts, lest they should turn to froth, Jer. 4. 24. *How long shall vain*

vain thoughts lodge within thee? What a world of sin is minted in the phancie! a child of God sets a spy over his thoughts, he summons them in, and captivates them to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10. 5. 3. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his passions; passion is like gunpowder, which the Devil setting on fire blows up the soul. *Jonah* in a passion quarrels with the Almighty, *Jonah* 4. 1, 9. He who is devoted to Religion, watcheth his passions, least the tyde growing high, reason should be carried down the stream, and be drowned in it. 4. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his duties, *Matth.* 26. 41. *Watch and Pray.* First, he doth watch in prayer, the heart is subject to remissness, if it be not dead in sin, it will be dead in prayer; a Christian watcheth, lest he should abate his fervour in duty; he knows of the strings if his spiritual Violl slacken, he cannot make melody in his heart to the Lord. Secondly, he doth watch after prayer; as a man is most careful of himself when he comes out of an hot bath, the pores being then most open and subject to cold: so a Christian is most careful when he comes from an Ordinance, lest his heart should decoy him into sinne; therefore when he hath prayed he sets a watch: he deals with his heart as the Jews dealt with Christs sepulchre, *Matth.* 27. 66. *They made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch.* A good Christian having been at the Word, and Sacrament, (that sealing Ordinance) after the sealing he sets a watch. 5. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his temptations: Temptation is the scout the Devil sends out to discover our forces; tis the train he layes to blow up our grace, Satan ever lies at the catch, he hath his depths, *Rev.* 2. 24. his methods, *Ephes.* 4. 14. his devices, 2 Cor. 2. 11. he is continually fishing for our souls, and if Satan be angling, we had need be watching: He who makes Religion his business is full of holy excubation, he lies sentinel, and with the Prophet stands upon his watch-tower, *Hab.* 2. 1. *Solomon* saith of a virtuous woman, her candle goes not out by night, *Prov.* 31. 18. the good Christian keeps his watch-Candle alwaies burning.

8. He who makes Religion his business, every day casts up his accounts to see how things go in his soul. *Solomon* saith, know the state of thy flock, *Prov.* 27. 23. a man that makes Religion his work, is careful to know the state of his soul; before the Lord brings him to a tryal, he brings himself to a tryal; he had rather use the looking-glass of the word to see his own heart, than put on the broad spectacles

Col. 3. 16.

adha, udo-
Sia, vnuata

8. Charatt.
Lam. 3. 40.
Seneca.

Numb. 5. 22.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

9 Charact.

Ure, unde, di-
uile, Idola sua
non adorabi-
mus, Tertul.

10 Charact.

Tit. 2. 14.

spectacles of censure to see anothers fault: he playes the Critick upon himself, he searcheth what sin is in his heart unrepented of; and having found it out, he labours by his tears, as by the waters of *jealousie*, to make the thigh of sin to rot: He searcheth whether he have grace or no, and he tries whether it be genuine or spurious; he is as much afraid of painted holiness, as he is of going to a painted Heaven: He traverseth things in his soul, and will never leave, till that question, *whether he be in the faith*, be put out of question: Here is the man making Religion his business; he is loth to be a spiritual bankrupt, therefore is still calling himself to account, and wherein he comes short, he gets Christ to be his surety.

9. He who makes Religion his business, will be religious whatever it cost him: He is a resolved man, *Psal. 116. 109. I have sworn I will keep thy righteous judgments.* There are some who will be rich, *1 Tim. 6. 9.* and there are some who will be godly, *2 Tim. 3. 12.* He that makes Religion his business, will not (as *Luther* saith) be put off with other things, he can want health, riches, friends, but he cannot want Christ or grace; *he will be godly*: let the times be what they will, they shall not take him off the work of Religion, he will follow Christ *upon the water*, the floods of persecution cannot drown his zeal; he doth not say, *There is a Lyon in the way*, he will wrastle with difficulties, march in the face of death. The Christians of the Primitive Church cryed out to the Persecutor, *Hew us in pieces, burn us, we will never worship your Idols*: these were in good earnest for Heaven. There is a great deal of difference between them who go to sea for pleasure, and those mariners who are to go a voyage to the *East Indies*: The first upon the least storm retreat back to shore; but they who are imbarqued for a voyage, hold on their course, though the Sea be rough and stormy, and will venture their lives in hope of the golden harvest at the *Indies*. Hypocrites seem religious when things are serene and calm, but they will not say in a storm: Those only who make Religion their business, will hold out their voyage to Heaven in the midst of tempests, and death-threatening dangers.

10. He that makes Religion his business, lives every day as his last day; he prayes in the morning, as if he were to die at night; he lives as if he were presently to be called to Gods barr; he walks *soberly, righteously, godly*; he girds his loyns, trims his lamp, sets his house in order, that when death comes for him with an *Habeat Corpus*, he may have nothing to do but to die. Behold here the man

man who makes Religion his business.

Use 5. Let me persuade all you whose consciences may smite you *Use 3.* for former neglects, now set upon the work, make Religion your *Exhortation.* business; contend *tanquam pro aris & focis*, bestir your selves in this as in a matter of life and death. *Quest.* But how must we do to *Quest.* make Religion our business? *Answ.* That you may be serious in this *Answ.* work, I shall lay down several Rules for your help and direction *Rules for making Religion our business.* herein.

1. If you would make Religion your business, possess your selves with this maxime, That Religion is the end of your Creation. God never sent men into the world only to eat and drink, and put on fine cloaths; but the end of their creation is to honour him, *1 Pet. 4. 11.* *That God in all things may be glorified:* Should the body only be tended and looked after, this were to trim the scabbard instead of the blade; it were to invert and frustrate the very end of our being.

2. If you would make Religion your business, get a change of heart wrought; breathe after a principle of holiness: he cannot make Religion his business, who hath no Religion. Can the body move without a principle of life? Christian, get thy heart spiritualized by grace; an earthly heart will no more trade in Heaven, than a millstone will ascend, or a Serpent fly in the air: the heart must be divinely touched with the Spirit, as the needle with the loadstone, ere it can cleave to God, and follow him fully; never expect the practise to be holy, till first there be an holy principle.

3. If you would make Religion your business, set your selves always under the eye of God. "The Masters eye makes the servant work; Gods eye will quicken our devotion. *Psal. 16. 8.* *I have set the Lord alway before me.* If we leave off work, or loiter in our work, God sees, he hath a judgement opens into our breasts: this (as *Chrysostome* calls it) this eye of God that never sleeps, would make us active in the sphere of duty: if indeed Gods eye were at any time off us, we might slacken our pace in Religion, but he is ever looking on; if we take the wings of the morning, we cannot fly from his presence; and he who is now the spectator, will be the Judge. O how would this consideration of Gods omniscience keep us from being truants in Religion, how would it infuse a spirit of activity and gallantry into us, making us put forward with all our might in the race to Heaven!

4. If you would make Religion your business, think often of the

the shortness of time; this life is but a vapour, Jam. 4. 9. a shadow, 1 Chron. 29. 15. 'tis *ΠΝΕΥΜΑ* as nothing, Psal. 39. 5. *ἡ βίη τοῦ σώματος*, we are wheeling apace out of the world, and there's no work to be done for our souls in the grave: Eccles. 9. 2. *Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work nor device in the grave whither thou goest.* Now is the time of life, now is the day of grace, you know not how soon these two Suns may set: The shorter our life, the swifter should be our pace.

5. Rule.

5. If you would make Religion your business, get an understanding heart, weigh things seriously in the ballance of reason and judgement. Think of the infinite importance of this business, our eternal misery or happiness depends upon it: other things are but for convenience, this is of necessity: if this work be not done, we are undone; if we do not the work which believers are doing, we must do the work which Devils are doing: and if God give us a serious heart, to lay out our selves in the business of Religion, our income will be greater than our expence. Religion is a good Trade if it be well followed; it will quit the cost; 'tis working in silver, *ὁ δὲ εὐχόμενος τὸν κληρονομήσει τὸν θρόνον* 1 Pet. 1. 9. *Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.* God will shortly take us from the working-house to the Throne; and will set upon our head a fresh Garland made of the flowers of Paradise.

6. Rule.

6. If you would make Religion your business, implore the help of Gods Spirit. All we can do is but lost labour, unless the Spirit excite and accelerate. Beg a gale from Heaven. Cant. 4. ult. *Awake O North wind, and come thou South blow upon my Garden,* &c. If the Spirit joyn with our Chariot, then we move to Heaven swiftly, as the Roe upon the mountains, or as the Charets of Amminadab.

Now having laid down the Rules, let me for a conclusion, press all Christians to this great duty of making Religion their business; and I will use but two weighty considerations:

Motive.

1. The sweetness that is in Religion; *all her paths are pleasantness*, Prov. 3. 17. The way of Religion is strowed with Roses, in regard of that inward peace God gives, Psal. 19. 11. *In keeping thy precepts there is great reward.* This is such a labour as hath delight in it: as while the mother tends her child, and sometimes beyond her strength too, yet finds a secret delight in it; so while a Christian is serving God, there's that inward contentment and delight infused, and he meets with such transfigurations of soul, that he thinks himself

self half in Heaven. 'Twas Christs *meat and drink* to do his Fathers will, *John 4. 34.* Religion was St. Pauls recreation, *Rom. 7. 22.* Though I should not speak of wages, the vails God gives us in this life, is enough to make us in love with his service.

2. The second and last consideration is, That millions of persons have miscarried to eternity, for want of making Religion their business : they have something in Religion, but not to purpose : they have begun, but have made too many stops and pauses : they have been lukewarm and neutral in the business; they have served God as if they served him not; they have sinned severely, but prayed faintly; Religion hath been a thing only by the by; they have served God by fits and starts, but have not made Religion *their business*, therefore have miscarried to all eternity. If you could see a wicked mans Tombstone in Hell, you might read this Inscription upon it; *Here lies one in hellish flames, for not making Religion his business*. How many Ships have suffered shipwreck; notwithstanding all their glorious names of the *Hope*, the *Safe guard*, the *Triumph* : so how many souls, notwithstanding their glorious title of *Saintship*, have suffered shipwreck in Hell for ever, because they have not made Religion *their business*.

2. *Motive.*





Whether well composed Religious Vows do not exceedingly promote Religion?

Psal. 116. ver. 12, & 14.

*What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?
I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.*



David was no Popish votary, nor were the Vows he is now about to pay, like the Vows of Popish and Superstitious votaries, either in the Matter of them, or in the Object of them, nor in the Manner or End of them; and I hope you who read these lines, are, as the greatest part of my Auditors were far enough from liking of such Vows in others, and from lying under the ensnaring eye of any such Vow your selves. Since then there is such unlikeness hoped from you, justify the unlikeness and disparity between my discourse and theirs, whose business is either to state and maintain Monkish vows, or to state and overthrow them; the one the work of Popish, the other the work of Protestant Writers. In the Words which I have chosen, we have a fit occasion to state our own case by David's, who was mindful of his debt to the Lord, and the more careful to discharge it, because it was due by vow.

Two things noted will be a Key to open the words, so far as we at present are concerned in them.

1. That the sum of all our Religion, is our rendering to the Lord.
I might

I might so define Religion, and with these qualifications, that it be done in right and due Manner, in Right and proper Matter; it would amount to a definition of the True Religion: *All the Religions which men have in the vanity and blindness of their minds superstitiously and idolatrously adhered to, have been nothing else but their Rendering to their supposed Gods, according to their apprehensions and erroneous thoughts, and the Rendering to the true God in a true and right manner, is the summe of true Religion.* This Notion is consonant to the Scriptures: Thus *Matth. 22. v. 21. Give unto God the things that are God's*; as true loyalty is a giving to *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar's*, so true Piety is the giving to God the things that are God's. And so in that Parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen; *All we owe to God*, is expressed by the rendering the fruits of the vineyard; particular Acts of Religion are so expressed too in the Scriptures. Let this then be the import of *David's* *מה אשיב לך* what shall I render to the Lord? In what things? and by what means shall I promote Religion in the exercise thereof? How shall I shew myself duely Religious toward him who hath been constantly and abundantly munificent in his benefits towards me?

The second thing to be noted is this, that *David* so ordered his vowes that he could pay them, and in paying them did so render to the Lord, as that Religion was promoted and furthered; He had so engaged himself by vow, that he could say *I will pay*; And his vowes were such as were a fit Answer to that enquiry, *What shall I render to the Lord?* *David* had very well composed his vow, it lay within his compass, he could perform it, and in performing he paid Tribute and did homage to the Lord; in keeping his vow he gave unto the Lord.

Now put these two notes together, and they are resolved into this Doctrinal position,

Vowes, so made as we can say we will pay them, and so made that in paying them we render to the Lord, do much advance and promote Religion. Or in the words of that Case of Conscience now to be stated, *Well composed vowes do much promote Religion.*

Who so doth engage himself by a well ordered vow, doth set his Religion in the whole, or in some particular part of it in very good forwardness. Religion is a gainer by this bargain well made; the Bond is to God, but Religion receives the interest at least, *Well composed vowes are Religion's engines, able to move the weightier burthens and loads, and fit to be only employed in them.*

In handling farther this Case we must enquire,

Z z z 2

I. What

Doctr.

1. What a Vow is, that we may know of what we speak?
2. Whether a Vow may lawfully be made by us?
3. When it is well composed for Religion's advantage?
4. How much it furthereth Religion?
5. Whence this influence of a Vow upon Religious persons?
6. What proper use to make of the Position?

I. General.

A Vow is a voluntary and deliberate Promise made unto God in an extraordinary case. It is a Religious promise made unto God in a holy manner, to a Modern writer defines it. It is a Holy and Religious promise advisedly and freely made unto God, either to do or to omit somewhat which appeareth to be grateful and well pleasing unto him.

So Buchanan. I forbear Aquinas his definition of a Vow: If these I have given satisfie not, then view it in the words of Peter Martyr, a man of repute and well known to our own nation in the dayes of Edward the Sixth of ever blessed memory; (a) It is a Holy Promise, whereby we bind our selves to offer somewhat unto God. There is one more who defines it, and he is a man whose judgement, Learning and Holiness hath perfumed his Name, it is Learned Perkins in his Cases of Conscience. A Vow (saith he) is a Promise made unto God of Things Lawful and Possible.

Of these five descriptions of a Vow, you may indifferently chooe which you will, for when you have chosen either of them, and looked upon it, you will find it lay's an obligation upon the person vowing, and bind's him strictly, and unalterably to perform his vows: for it is (1.) a promise (b), it is not a Purpose, nor a single resolution, much less is it the Deliberation of the mind concerning a matter not yet determined, but determinable on either part. A Vow is a Promise which had its beginning in a serious, due, and thorow Deliberation, which from Deliberation passed into a Rational, strong and fixed purpose of doing what had been so deliberated and

weighed. Nay further yet, a Vow passeth into a formal, and express Promise, and so makes the votary a debtor. This part of a Vow Solomon hath long since prepared to our hands, Eccles. 5. v. 6.

Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, neither say thou before the Angel that it was error. Note what Solomon forbids, viz.

Offend not by rash vowing: Nor seek excuse by saying (d) it was an error, i. e. thorough mistake and imprudence thou hast vowed, not observing what thou diddest when thou vowedst. It must be a deliberate, and

advised act of a man if he will duly vow to God. (2.) It is said to be voluntary; the thing speaks it self, a Vow must be free, it is

injurious

injurious to extort a Promise from a man; free choice should be the spring of every promise much more of every Vow. The old Law empowerd some persons to disanul the vow of another, but no Law or reason can empower any one to enforce a Vow upon another, each one may forbear to vow; *Deut. 23. v. 22. (3.)* As it must be voluntarily and deliberate, so it must be to God alone; we read still, *if thou wilt vow, thou shalt vow to the Lord*: Not to Angels with such as worship them, not to Saints with superstitious Papists; not to any man, man may promise solemnly unto man, but he may not vow; man may be the witness of thy vow, but man may not be the object. For the dependance of man upon man, is not great enough to warrant the one in vowing, or the other in expecting such a vow; beside that, we must not vow to one, we must not pray to, nor can we expect help from man in cases that are just ground for, and which do require a vow from us. Which cases (4.) I say are extraordinary, and more than usual either from received mercy or hoped and expected mercy; It is impossible he should well compose his vows, or duly pay them, who makes ordinary, and daily cases ground of his vows; we cannot but forget many an ordinary mercy received, but we may not, must not forget any vow made: We must pray for every mercy we want, but we may not bind our selves in the bonds of a vow for every mercy we pray for, this would inevitably cast us upon the sin of falsehood and unfaithfulnesses in our vows.

But I proceed to the second thing to be enquired into, that is, Whether it be lawful in any case for us now under the New Testament to make a Vow? That it was lawful for the Jew, none have doubted, but some doubt is made, whether a Christian may voluntarily bind himself to God by making a Vow? The solution of this doubt is necessary to our clearer determination of this Case, for if vows were now unlawful to us, they could neither be well composed, nor could they advantage Religion; and if it may appear they may lawfully be made, then we may go on in the consideration of the remaining particulars. To this second then very briefly we answer, That a Christian may lawfully make a promise or Vow unto God, binding himself more than ordinarily unto God for, and in expectation of mercy, in some or other more than ordinary case or exigency. For a great mercy received already a Christian may vow thankfulness, for a mercy not received but expected, he may vow upon the receipt to render to the Lord more than usual duty. Such vows at this day may be used

2. General.

Ejusmodi vota used by us, so often as the Lord hath delivered us from any destruction, *hodie quoque* us- or dangerous disease, or from any danger, saith Calvin, speaking of *his in usu esse* Vowes for mercy to be received. And Mr. Perkins in his Cases of *possant, quoties* conscience, both affirms what we now do, and answers the Objections *nos Dominus* made to the contrary. But leave we men, and come to Reason; why *vel à clade ali-* it is lawful for us to vow. *qua, vel à*

morbo difficili,
vel ab alio
quorvis discrimine *eripuit.*
Calvin. *Instit.*
l. 4. c. 13.

* 1. Vowes
well-ordered
not sin in
themselves,
nor by acci-
dent.

1. What is not evil in it self, nor evil by accident * (unless made evil by the undue ordering of it through our fault) may lawfully be done by us. I know this well considered proves it self; yet I would confirm it with this observation: What is not evil, may lawfully be done by us; now things are evil either *per se*, or *per accident*; If Vowes be either way evil, it is by accident, which accidental evil may be prevented, and indeed is by due composing of Vowes, and by diligent performing of them when composed. So that if a Christian may order the making and performing his Vow, so as to prevent the evil which attends a Vow ill-made; than such a Christian may surely make a Vow very lawfully. But I presume no one will doubt, that he who makes Vowes seldome, consultedly, and sincerely, may duly keep them, and in so doing, prevent any consequent evil.

* 2. Some
Vowes once
lawful on mo-
ral grounds,
Such lawful
itill.

2. Vowes may be lawfully made now by us Christians, because what was lawful to the Jew on Moral considerations, and not on any Ceremonial considerations, that is also lawful now unto us Christians. Let it be noted; I do not say what was once lawful to them, is now lawful unto us, for it was lawful for them to sacrifice, it is not now lawful unto us: But I say, what was once on Moral grounds lawful to them, is now lawful to us, because the morality of the thing (which is supposed the ground of this Vow) is the same to them and us. It was lawful for Jacob on Moral motives to engage himself more closely to God, if God would indeed be with him; It is as lawful for any of us on the same occasion, and for the like motive, to vow unto God. Jacob was moved to it, lest he should be found less than ordinarily thankful, for a more than ordinary providence and mercy to him: So may you or I; * for it is not abhorrent to the duty of a pious man, at such time to consecrate (as a solemn testimony of his acknowledgement) an offering by Vow, lest he should seem unthankful for his bounty. If there were then *Vota moralia*, Vowes that were moral in their matter, manner, motives, and ends; and (that such there were) Job's covenant with his eyes, and David's swearing to keep Gods Commandments, prove to us; either

* *Neque enim à*
prii hominis of-
ficio, tunc ab-
horret votivam
oblationem, ve-
lut solenne re-
cognitionis
Symbolum
consecr. re. ut
ingratus erga
benignitatem
ejus videatur.
Calvin. *Instit.*
l. 4. c. 13.

we

we must say they did what was unlawfull, or else we cannot make such moral Vows,) which is not rational to suppose) or else yielding such Vows so made to be lawfull to them, they are so to us. But thirdly.

Vows may lawfully be made by us Christians, for it is a kind of *3. Vows by gratitude and acknowledgment made to God, with the universal moral consent approbation and consent of men.* It is such a chief Rent that no Nation in the world putting a value on Gods goodness, and putting a difference between great and little dangers, between great and little blessings, but did constantly approve this way of preventing great dangers, by great Vows, and resenting great blessings, by like vowed praises. Thus addressing themselves in a more then ordinary manner to their Gods, on more than ordinary exigences: And if I must bring my witnesses to depose for the truth, one speaks in English thus; *Vow was used frequently by all Nations and people beset with danger.* Another learned Pen at once intimateth the universality of the custome, and censureth the vanity and blind folly of the Heathens, in their Vows to their Idol-Gods. Hence the *† follier and puls in periculo monstrous absurdities of the Heathens in their Vows, wherewith they did so insolently abuse their Gods.* It were endless to attempt what testimonies might be gathered up in this point: but by these it is apparent, that thankfulness is a debt which all Nations apprehended might and ought to be ensured to God by Vow. So that hence I would collect, that as gratitude is not only lawfull, but a duty imprinted on the soul of man; so this high degree of gratitude is a Copy, or Transcript of that Original: It is lawful doubtles to us, to be thankful in the highest degree. Now the return of more than ordinary duty, for more than ordinary mercy, is the highest, and is the Vow we speak of.

Fourthly, *Unless such Vows may be accounted lawfull to us, I cannot see how we have any way of making free, voluntary, and extraordinary acknowledgments unto God.* For since all duty is commanded, and so determined as to matter and manner ordinarily, that the Law prescribes, and enjoyns them, and we may not superadde any thing to the Law; yet sometime more than ordinary mercy gives us command to be more than ordinary in our acknowledgements, which since it may not be by doing any thing not commanded, must be done by adding our own promise and word, to have more than our ordinary care was, or otherwise would have been, to do what is commanded; or else it must be left undone as unlawfull,

full, which is in the issue to leave us without any way of binding our selves to acknowledgements, suited to extraordinary providences. In a word, Seeing the Law of God is the standing rule of our daily obedience, and is the same unchanged rule of our daily duties; but withal the mercies and varieties of providences are a Law likewise to us Christians, and when great, require great and suitable deportment in us. We must have some way, and that lawful, to measure our our resentments, which can be no other, but the laying bonds and voluntary obligations on our selves unto God, which is the same with this Vow. Either there must be some such lawful way, or else great providential mercies which call for greater returns, and are a real Law to us, cannot be duely observed and obeyed. Now I know riches of grace in the Gospel have not so intrenched on, or done injury to providences. I know that as grace is no enemy to the standing Law, nor patronizeth licentiousness; so neither is grace an enemy to providence, nor warranteth any one to overlook the greatness, and extraordinary mercy in any providences; or to be careless and sleight in answering them with unsutable return of thankfulness. But,

Fifthly; *That is lawful to us Christians, which doth most certainly ensure our duty to God, yet doth not ensnare us in the ensuring of it.* That you or I may do lawfully, which will not ensnare us, but more strongly engage us to our duty, none will doubt this. In dealing with a man, you, or I, or any reasonable man would be ready to give any security that we might give, without ensnaring of our selves. Now *Vows well composed do more ensure the duty, for we cannot go back, it is a Vow; yet do not ensnare, for we can perform them, they are Vows well composed.* Jephthah's Vow bound him fast, for it was the bond of a Vow; but this bond ensnared him, for it was rash, and ill composed; such was unlawful to him and is to us. David's Vow here was an ensuring him to God, and his duty, it unalterably bound him; yet it was no snare to him; for he had so vowed, that he could say, *I will pay my Vows; such Vows were lawful to him, such are lawful to us.* Now all well composed Vows will be such; they will very firmly bind us to our duty, and they will never ensnare us in their binding us; which thing will be more plainly seen, upon discovery of the next General, viz.

When Vows are well composed, and so consequently for the advantage of Religion?

First then, If you would duely and well compose your Vows,

3. General.
It must be,
1. In extraordinary cases.

you must wait a fit season, not vow on every occasion. Who is ready to vow on every occasion, will break his Vow on every occasion. It is a necessary Rule, That we be as sparing in making our Vowes, as may be; there being many great inconveniencies attending frequent, and multiplyed Vows. It is very observable, that the Scripture mentioneth very few examples of Vows, compared with the many Instances of very great and wonderful providences; as if it would give us some Instances that we might know what we have to do, and yet would give us but few that we might know we are not to do it often. You read Jacob lived sevenscore and seven years, Gen. 47.28. but you read (I think) but of one Vow that he made: Our extraordinary exigencies are not many, and I say our Vows should not be more. Let this then be the first necessary ingredient of a well-ordered vow. Let it be no oftner made, then the pressing greatness of an evil to be removed, or the alluring excellency of a blessing extraordinary to be obtained, will well warrant. Jephthah's vow was so far right; he had just occasion; there was a great and pressing danger to be removed; there was an excellent blessing to be obtained; the danger was lest Israel should be enslaved; the blessing was victory over their enemies: This warranted his Vow, though his rashness marred it. It was in David's troubles that David sware, and vowed a Vow to the most High, Psal. 132. 1, 2. And Jacob forbore to vow, untill his more than ordinary case bade him vow, and warranted him in so doing, Gen. 28.20. Let us do as he did, spare to vow, until such case puts us on it.

Secondly, When the extraordinary case warrants thee to this extraordinary obliging thy self, then be sure to proceed deliberately, and with advice. Consider what thou doest; every one condemns rash Vowes, and I am sure inconsiderate Vowes are rash ones. Here Jephthah failed; he did not consider, and ponder with himself, what he was about to do when he vowed: Aquinas reckons this among the three things necessary to a Vow. And since this was wanting in Jephthah, the Scripture makes a narration of his fact, but no where giveth commendation to it. This is one of the conditions Bucan prescribes, That we thoroughly weigh: But we have a greater than Aquinas, or the other two, here; Be not rash with mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, Eccl. 5. Which rule he doth in the Context extend to this case of Vowes, Verse 4, 5, 6. Be not hasty, but deliberate these four things in thy Vow;

2. It must be deliberate.

Ad votum tria
de necessitate
requiruntur;
scilicet deliberatio,
Sec. 2a. 2a. q.
88. art. 1.
Scriptura hoc
ejus factum

narrat tantum
sed non laudat.
Pet. Mart. loc.
com. cl. 3. c. 6.
Vt mature de-
liberemus. loc.
com. de votis.

A a a a

1. First,

1. Whether
lawful.

1. First, Whether that thou vowest to do be lawful; for can never be the matter of a justifiable and well composed Vow. If that thou vowest be not lawful, it is not so much a Vow, as a contriving and designing of wickedness. It was a murderous conspiracy of those more than forty, Act. 23. 21. not a Vow, to take away Paul's life. Whatever God hath forbidden us in our ordinary course of life, as he hath forbidden every sin, that cannot be the matter of an extraordinary promise unto God. The Schoolmen tells us it is to be *de meliore bono*, in an excellency good; now what is not lawful, is not good. They tell us, *Debet fieri Deo, de re qua Dei sunt*: It must be made to God, in the thing that are of God; and we are sure no unlawful thing is of God.

Aquin. 2. 2.
q. 88. ar. 1. c.2. Whether ac-
ceptable to
God.

2. As it must be considered, whether the thing be lawful; so next we are to consider, whether it will be acceptable unto the Lord. The Vow is made to him, and the performance of it is to him: It is a Debt, and payment is to be made to him. If it be a matter which thou findest upon after-search, to be indeed lawful, yet in reason to be thought, not acceptable for so great a mercy as thou hast received; thou wilt be enforced to confess thy mistake and error in vowing: And this is to provoke God, Eccles. 3. 6. *Sit Deo acceptum*, is the second circumstance under deliberation: Which will be seen,

3. Whether pro-
portioned.

3. By a third particular, i. e. Whether that thing thou vowest, bear a proportion to that thou didst expect and pray for when thou vowest, or to that thou hadst received, for which thou dost now make thy Vow. Bring it, with the providence which occasioned it; set them together; and hear what thy own reason; what other mens judgement; what the very things themselves; what thy receipts and returns say of thy Voyyes, in the matter of them; as in ordinary. So in all extraordinary mercies, God requires and accepteth only suitable and well proportioned returns: If it be over proportioned, it will hazard thee; if it be under proportioned, it will shame thee; and neither will be so well accepted. Though one meats meat when thou art hungry, is more, and a greater mercy, than thou canst equal by thy obedience; yet to vow thy self, and all that is thine for that one mercy, is more than is expected, and may be called a disproportioned Vow. So on the contrary, to pray for a prosperous voyage, and an ample return of thousands, and to vow thereupon a few pence or shillings, is disproportioned, will not be accepted. Thou must render to the Lord, according to thy receipts from the Lord.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, In a well-composed Vow, thy deliberation must be ^{4. whether in} employed in considering thy power and ability; ^{whether it be, in thy} ^{thy power.} *Whether it be, in thy power to do what thou vowest: No impossible thing can be the matter of a Vow.* God hath not made an impossibility the matter and primitive object of our duty; nor doth he expect we should; or would he accept such a Vow: for a Vow of an impossible thing, is in effect to bind our selves to falsify our Vow. *Who engageth to do what he cannot do, engageth himself to be worse than his word.* You must consider then whether the thing be possible in it self; and then next whether it be in your power, that you can say you will do it, that you may truly affirm you can absolutely do it; which thing being very uncertain, for what is to day in our power, to morrow may be out of our power: It is therefore good to limit it so far, as it shall be in your power, and so long as it continues in your power to perform your Vows. These two things are requisite to a well-composed Vow; an occasion or exigency more than ordinary; and then a thing lawful, acceptable, proportioned to the mercy, and within our power. Now when these concur,

A third must be added, that is, *Thou must vow cheerfully, and with* ^{3. Vowes must} ^{be cheerfully} ^{made.} *a ready mind*; there must be much of the will in it. Some tell us the Latine word noting a Vow, comes from the word which signifies the will; Indeed all that is in a Vow, so far as it is a Vow, is and must be of our will, for it consisteth principally, if not solely, in the manner of our obliging our selves: and this is voluntary. God hath left it much at our liberty to vow, or not to vow; only he requires us to do it cheerfully if we vow; it is matter of our choyce. *Deut. 23. 22. If thou shalt vow to vow, it shall not be sin unto thee.* Yet if we will Vow, it is matter of duty to do it cheerfully, for, *so the Lord loveth a cheerful giver, 2 Cor. 9. 7.* and therefore expects a speedy performance. *Defer not to pay, Eccl. 5. 3.* Hence the Rabbinical Proverb, *Speed suits the time of deliverance.* As a Vow suits the time of dangers and straits; so hast from a ready mind, fits the time of deliverance and mercy. But,

Fourthly, *He that will compose his Vow well, must vow sincerely and uprightly, that is, to the end he may most honour God.* By

1. The Commemoration of his mercy, and goodness. Vows are mercies Monuments, on which are written the praise of the Lord.

2. The publishing the mercies of God, for the engaging others to admire the Lord, and to trust him, and to seek unto him.

3. The setting grace on work in the heart and soul of him that

Aaaa 2

Vowes.

בשעה
רוחא
שׂטנא

Tempore respi-
rationis festi-
natio.

4. Vow sin-
cerely.

Vows. It sets grace on work, *but* in that part which eyes God to draw nearer, and to keep closer to him, *and* in that part which keeps eye on sin to prevent, mortifie, and destroy it: So then *when a Christian*, (having received, or being in expectation of some extraordinary mercy from God) *doth deliberately promise*, what is lawfull in *it self*, acceptable to God, proportioned to the mercy, and, within his power to perform; who so doth this chearfully, and sincerely, that God may be honoured in the continued remembrance of it, in the publick declaring it, and in the exciting of grace, in the person Vowing; Then hath a Christian well composed his Vow. And such a Vow doth very much further Religion: Which will appear by handling the next thing, *How much, or in what things it doth further and promote Reli-*

4. General.

How well composed Vows promote Religion.

The credit of Religion.

gion? Now there are three grand concerns of Religion, than which it hath none greater; and all three are carried on, and promoted by such Vows as these.

First, Religion hath its concernment in the credit and reputation which it hath in the World: Religion hath a name to look after so well as you, or I; and it loseth, or gaineth as it is either honoured, or reproached by the Professors of it: Now when times of extraordinary danger drive us to our Prayers and Vows to the true God; and we resolve to have mercy from him, or to choose to fall into his hand, this sets the credit and honour of Religion, that it can have recourse to God whom we know can deliver us. This is somewhat; but the making a Vow doth not so much honour Religion as the performing of it doth, when it is hereby declared to the world, that Religion is the thing makes men the same in their mercies, which they were in their distresses; that the God they worship is the true God, able to require their Vows if they should neglect to pay them. A Heathen who in distress makes a Vow, and in his safety performs it carefully, putteth a very high honour upon his false God, upon his Idol. What Christian soever makes and keeps his Vows duely doth likewise put an honour on the true God.

It honours,

1. The power and providence of God, by acknowledging its Sovereignty over all in the world; and its particular disposing and over-ruling of us and our concerns, vvhhen thou Prayest and Vovvest in a strait, thou seemest to tell the World thou believest that thy God rules the World by his power and providence. But vvhhen thou payest thy Vows thou really testifiest to the World that thou believest, and ownest this power in thy particular case; so vvhhen *Jephthah*, vvhhen *David* paid their

Vovvs,

Vows, they did give real testimony that their God delivered them by his power and providence, and this is Religious honour that it is the Worship of so mighty a God.

2. *It honours God in his readiness to hear, and in his faithfulness to answer the prayers of his suppliants;* Prayers conceived speak a belief that he is ready, Vows made speak our confidence that he is faithful, but now Vows performed speak thus much, that we have found him so to us; when *David* said, *I will pay my vows*; it is, that he may render to the Lord for the Lords readiness and faithfulness to hear and deliver him. Now its Religious honour, that it is the worship of a God of truth and faithfulness.

3. *It honours God in his Omniscience and all-seeing eye, it declares to the world that we worship and serve a God who takes notice of us in particular, and who observes whether we keep our word with him or no;* when thou hast made a Vow, and canst perform it, yea dost perform it, because thou knowest and believest thy God remembers when thou didst make it, and observeth how thou wilt perform it, what is this but to give him the honour of his all-seeing and all-observing eye!

4. *It honours Religion in that it is a Demonstration that Religion teacheth men gratitude.* It is a high charge which is laid on the Romans in their Heathenism, that they were unthankful, *Rom. 1. 21.* It is a very great reproach to Religion, to have its professors branded with this: It is (though but one single miscarriage) left one *Hezekiah's* name, like a spot in the Moon, to endure while his name shall be in remembrance. *That he remembered not to return to the Lord, according to the benefit done unto him, 2 Chron. 32. 25.* But now thy care to make thy Vows well, that they may be kept, and thy thankfulness in keeping them, when so made, do clearly evidence, that thy Religion engageth thee to aim and attempt at the highest gratitude. Now according to the old Rule, if you say a man is unthankful, you say he is all naught; so if you say he is thankful, and his Religion teacheth him to be so, you speak all good of the man and of his Religion. *Si ingratus dixeris omnia, dicis.* Indeed *David* doth often comprise all Religion in this, *Be thankful unto him.*

So Religion shineth forth in the lustre and brightness of a good name, when they who profess it, dare neither be rash in making, nor remiss or false in keeping their Vows.

Next Vows well composed, and faithfully performed, do much promote Religion, and that frequently.

2. By

Spreading Religion.

2. *By setting forward the growth of Religion, in the midst of those who profess it.* (So I will only speak of this now, albeit I might speak of the spreading of Religion amongst such, who before were strangers to it, by the faithfulness of some zealous, prudent, and industrious votaries.) When Christians on great exigencies are brought on their knees to pray, and plead, and confess, and promise, if they may be heard, and when they come to praise, acknowledge and pay their Vows to God in the presence of those are called his people; it is very powerful to

By confirming.

1. *Confirm them in the profession, and to establish them;* For who would not hold fast where he can observe such goodness, tenderness, and power in God he worshippeth? Men, religious men, some at least will praise the Lord, for such wonderful works to the children of men, when they see such excellent loving kindnesses, shewed to the distressed; the children of men will put their trust in God. None will leave the shadow of that vvhich so saveth.

Psal. 107.

Psal. 36. 7.

Reforming.

2. *It is very like to make them enquire into the ways and doings which have been theirs, but have not been good, and to look forward to the vvaies vvhich must be theirs, and must be amended;* vvhena stander by shall observe the distress a good man is in, and how he respects neglect of duty, prevalency of corruption, necessity of reforming, and binds himself to more diligent discharge of duty, to more vigorous opposition of sin, to constant care of reforming; he is ready to reflect on himself, and if he be vvhich he professeth, will judge himself one vvhich is as deep in the faults, as much needing to reform, and as near to the like or greater distress; he may ere long be put to it, and therefore it will be best to be on the amending hand.

3. *Vowes promote Religion in the votaries heart and life.*

But however thirdly, *Vowes well made, and kept well, very much improve and promote Religion in the heart, and life of him who so Voweth and keepeth his Vow;* If none of those who are acquainted vvhich thy religious making and keeping thy Vowes, should either honour it more, or set to the exercise of it more, yet certainly it will produce such effects in thy life, as will very much conduce to the increase of godliness and righteousness; vvhich will appear by some few particulars, vvhich are undeniably the effects of a well-composed Vow, and do as undeniably promote and set forward Religion: As

1. *Vowes increase circumference.*

First; *A well composed Vow will make thee more circumspect and wary in the general course of thy life.* Such an influence it hath, as doth more directly vvhich on one particular part, yet is not terminated to that particular only. It is here as vvhich a Debtor, vvhich doubles

bles his bond and security for his debt, upon some extraordinary favour which his Creditor shewed him. This double bond directly looks to that particular debt, but it works on the debtor's ingenuity and gratitude, to be more careful in the discharge of all his debts; so thy Vow looks on a particular, but engageth thee to better discharge of all thy debts to God. Thus it was with *David*, *Psal. 36. 12. 13. Thy Vowes are upon me, O God.* Now these Vowes were made when he was in danger of his life, as it seemeth from the 13th *Vers.* For when God heard him, he delivered his soul from death; for this he Vowed Praises in particular, and he will render them, but withal, he takes himself to be hereby engaged to a more exact and circumspect walk before God in all duties; so he expresseth himself, *Vers.* 13. latter part, *Vowes are too broad and general, which are not fixed more especially to some one thing.* And, *They are too narrow which are so fixed to one, that they exclude all other things which might conveniently be taken in.* *Jacob* mentions Tithes as the particular object of his Vow, but *Jacob* withal intended a more exact and circumspect care over himself and Family in matters of Religion, as appeareth by those passages, *Genesis 35. 2. 3. Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, put away the strange Gods that are among you.* Here is the reforming of his household. And observe this was in consideration of Gods answering his prayers, when he Vowed unto God, who answered him in his distress, and was with him in the way which he went. So then like a stream it riseth from one spring-head, and runs in one main current; but it disperseth it self through many other smaller branches, and waters every part. But,

Secondly, *Well composed Vowes do very much promote Grace and Holiness in the heart of the power, in that it doth bring the man to a serious view and survey of his former defects and neglects;* when he comes to look over his streits; what likely brought them on him, and so put him on this extraordinary way of seeking God, and suing for mercy; when he reads over the bond he hath voluntarily entred into, and observes what put him thus in debt to God; when he views these, and such like particulars, he comes to knowledge of his former aberrations and defects. Now as a good and careful tradesman accounts he is in a good forwardness to a thriving way when he hath found out what did hinder and endamage his trade, for removal of which he hath set himself in a hopeful and likely way; so when a Christian comes

to

Vowes discover former defects.

to cast up accounts, to make even, he finds an unconstant and starting heart hath in this or that particular endamaged him, and if there be any way of dealing with it to keep it constant and stable, it is by doubling its bonds, and this must be done by vow; this course is like to repair former defects, and reparation I am sure is good and effectual means to keep up the house. Some Interpreters tell us that when Jacob came to reform his house, it was occasioned by his defective observance of his Vow; and that God in Gen. 35. 1. puts him in mind of it in such words, *Go up to Bethel and dwell there, and there build an Altar*; if their conjecture fail not, it is a pertinent instance to our case; Jacob had made a good Vow, and well ordered, and doubtless had performed much of it, yet thirty years after he is minded of it by God, and then he comes to consider and performe what was yet wanting, to make up his defects; Thus when care to perform Vows well made, discovers things ill carried in the prejudice of Religion, it makes way for future furtherance of Religion.

Dub.

But it is like you will enquire, *May a Christian vow the repairing of such defects?* are they not more than can be discerned? more than can be prevented? should he vow this would he not ensnare himself and break his vows?

Sol.

To this I answer briefly, That no man in the world may engage himself by vow, to live for future without any defects; such perfection is onely in Heaven; here it is not attainable. But a Christian may engage by Vow to be careful, and to do his best diligence to prevent as many as he can: He may vow, that so far as Grace shall enable him, he will endeavor to live with fewer faults. But a vow of full perfection can never be a well composed Vow, nor ever be performed.

3. Vows engage against a particular sin.

Thirdly, Well composed vows do promote Religion in the heart and life of a Christian, in that it strongly and unalterably engageth the Christian against some one or other particular sinne, which would more easily prevail, if the reverence or care of so sacred an engagement did not set the Christian against that sinne. Sometime we should sin by taking too little notice of great providences, or by setting them at too low rates, or by soon forgetting them, or by waxing proud and insolent under them. Now such sins provoke God, weaken Religions interest in the heart, and diminish its fruit in the life. Now when vows prevent such sinnes, they do as much promote Religion as preventing Physick promotes the health of the body; of such

such a nature was *Job's* covenant with his eyes, which shut the windows of his soul, and kept out sin by preventing its entrance at the out doors. *I have made a covenant with my eyes*, Job 31. 1. Away then with all alluring beauties, I cannot gaze on them, for I cannot be false to my vow and covenant. Every vow is for more strict and exact approbation of our selves, in either universal, or particular, either in a perpetual or temporary observance and serving the Lord: Now that promotes Religion, which thus exactly and strictly binds the soul to approve it self to God: Sin and Religion have two concerns as contrary to each other, as the Rebel, and the Law of his Sovereigne, and as he promotes the interest of his Sovereigne who doth strictly bind himself to oppose any Rebel, so he promotes Religion who by vow binds himself strictly to oppose any one sin whatever. If *Noah* vowed after his miscarriage against drinking any considerable quantity of wine that he might prevent that sin, this vow strengthened the interest of his holy sobriety, and the interest of Religion too, so far as sobriety promotes our fitness and greater aptness to Religious works.

But I shall be here asked, *May a man vow against any one particular sinne, and bind himself by so a great a bond against the committing of it?* The ground of the doubt is, because none so stands but he may fall, and it is not in our power to keep our selves from any sin. Doubt.

To this then I answer, That it would be rash and inconsiderate to vow absolutely and peremptorily, that thou wilt never act such or such a sinne. Sol.
But thus thou must justifiably vow;

1. That thou wilt endeavour, and with thy best diligence labour to prevent this or that sinne; thou mayest vow to set a guard upon thy soul, but thou mayest not vow the success of this guard; the endeavour is thy duty, and that thou mayest vow; the success is Gods gift, and that thou must pray for. And let weak Christians take notice of this, lest they ensnare themselves by vowing what is not in their power.

2. If thou wilt vow so, thou must do it still with dependance on the Lord for power to perform, through grace thou wilt not sin thus or thus, may be thy vow.

3. If thou wilt so vow, then take my advice with thee, (1.) Let it be onely against great sins, and such as are committed with deliberation; these are seen before committed and so are more easily resisted. (2.) Let it reach no farther then sincere endeavour against

them : And (3.) Be sure to do your utmost, and then though the sin may be too strong for you, yet are you not false to your vow. But next,

4. *Vowes encrease our care of particular duty.*

Fourthly, *Well composed vowes* do much promote Religion in the heart and life of a Christian, *inasmuch as they engage the Christian to a more intent care of some particular duty and Grace to be more than ordinarily attended and exercised* : A vow binds the votary to a more than ordinary care of duty, and to a more than ordinary diligence in the exercise of grace ; now where such a vow is so well composed that the duty may be more than ordinarily well performed, and the grace may be (more than usually hath been) exercised, there such a vow doth as much promote Religion, as its care doth exceed our ordinary care : Who bestows most on a duty, or on the constant exercise of a grace, doth do most to the promoting of Religion ; and I am sure, who so doth advisedly and duely vow, and doth punctually and duely perform his vow, is the man whose care is greatest in that duty and grace which his vow and the particular occasion of it did commend to his thoughts.

Dub. But may we vow to perform a duty, or exercise a grace ? Can we say tis in our power ?

Sol. To this in one word ; *Vow so far as it is and shall be in your power, and you may warrantably and acceptably do it before God* ; the performance of duty, and exercise of grace are debts we owe to God and we may bind our selves doubly to pay them so far as our stock will reach, and without this limitation every vow is rash and ill composed.

5. *Vowes, &c. by observing and improving providences.*

Fifthly, *Well composed Vowes* do much promote Religion, in that they engage us to a more diligent observing of Providences, and to a due improving them to the best advantage of grace : When thou hast vowed thou hast sealed on thy part ; if God do answer thy hope by his providence, he performs the condition on his part, and now it must be thy care to observe Gods providence, and to improve it ; so Jacob vowed, then observeth how God will perform with him, and afterwards makes the improvement : Now providence answering the expectation of one who voweth, hath in it,

1. *Remarkable power and faithfulness to be the ground of faith* ; this was seen in that Providence which gave *Jephtha* that victory which was his hope and expectation when he vowed.

2. *Eminent goodness and tenderness to be the loadstone and attractive of love* ; so in that Providence which brought *David* to the possession

possession of his hopes; and David thought so when he professed he would love God dearly, because he had delivered him out of the hand of all enemies. *Psalm 138: 1.*

3. *Eminent readiness to hear prayer*; when God doth as to *Jehoshaphat* speedily hear, or as to *Jacob*, continue still to hear for many years together.

4. *More than ordinary obliging considerations to draw forth our obedience*; such Providences have tongues to call for our faith, our love, our prayers, our obedience and our praises; What shall I render to the Lord? is the serious well advised votaries enquiry.

5. *A most undoubted evidence appropriating this to the Lord*, that the expecting Christian can truly say, it was the Lord's doing and his only, none bore part in the work, none shall bear away share of his trust, love, prayer or observant obedience due to him from me.

Now if these particulars be considered, it cannot sure be doubted longer, whether well composed vows do promote Religion, when they do so engage, and quicken those who vow to such Acts of Duty, to such exercise of Grace, to such opposition of sinne, to such improvement of providence, for the increase of Grace: And what is Religion but all these in one word, and what is the promoting of Religion, but the facilitating, continuing, and perfecting of all these, which is not a little furthered by such Vows.

It yet remains to shew, *Whence these well composed Vows have such influence on Religion, what have they in them more than ordinary thus to promote it?* To this I will answer as briefly as I may; There is in such Vows a most notable awakening, and quickening power, which sets all a mans care, wisdom, truth, and strength on work, to do the things whereby Religion is so much promoted.

1. *A deep rooted natural reverence and awe of a serious Vow*, which makes the man who hath so much sense of Religion as to make a Vow, to have as much care of performing it: Man is readier to cast off the reverence he owes to Gods Law, than to cast off the regard he hath to his own Vow, so that many times it is very expedient to engage by Vow to do what is our duty by the Law of God: The bond of natural conscience is very strong, and Vows have much of their strength from it, and thereby become great supporters of Religion.

2. *To this the Christian hath a superadded strict command, and precept of the Law of God indispensably, requiring the performance of*

that Vow which is lawfull and possible; I have opened my mouth and I cannot go back, Judg. 11. 35. It is the unalterable Law, if you vow; you must pay, Psal. 76. 12. God did indulge the Jews so far as to redeem some of their vows, but he allowed none to break them. Read that Deut. 23. 21. When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it, for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee. And ver. 23. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform. Now when so much of Religion lieth in and dependeth on such Vows, and these Vows are such inviolable ties that God will wink at none who break them, they cannot but have such influence and strong operation on persons to the advantage of Religion.

3. Gods severe judgments on contemners of their Vows, adde much to their influence: I will not mention examples of vengeance on Heathens for breach of their vows, though the Idol deserved not better, yet God who is the true God, would have men know such sacred bonds as Vows should not be profaned by sleight performing, or contemned by a total neglect of them. The Jewish Rabbits tell us, that God punished Jacob for neglecting his vow, by Dinah's miscarriage. However, it is enough God hath threatened the falsifier of his vows with no less than a destruction of the works of his hands, if not with the ruin of his person: God will not let such one go unpunished, lest his holy Name should be scorned, lest the people should be accustomed to an impious contempt of him, if the falsifier of his Vow should deny what he promised to God and go unpunished. In one word, that which stands thus on the unchangeable Law of Nature, and is written on the Conscience, what is confirmed and ratified by the peremptory positive Law of God, what is yet further armed with the terrible threat of the God of Heaven, must needs have a mighty binding strength in it obliging men: But now all these concur in Vows well composed, and hence they have such influence on Religious persons. You may adde the 4th, viz. The grations acceptance that God gives to persons so vowing and performing their Vows. With

5th, The signal Blessings crowning Religious persons in due performance of their vows; All which make them careful to vow so, that they may say they will pay their Vows, and in paying them, render to the Lord for all his benefits.

6. Gener. viz.
Use.

I am come now to the last thing I intended, the practical application of this Practical Case: And here Reader I shall be briefer than

*De sacramento
nomen ludibrio
exponeret
nec populus
assuesceret ad
implim ejus
conscriptum si
fraudator im-
punit, negaret
quod Deo pro-
miserat.
Bucanus loc.
com. 45. de Vot.*

than I first purposed, because I was enforced by the undiscerned speed of the time outrunning me in preaching it, to contract much more than I was willing to have done.

III The first *Use* then, if well composed Vowes do indeed much promote Religion, it will teach us how careful we should be in making ^{1. Use In-} our Vowes to the greatest advantage of Religion. If you look to the necessary requisites of such Vowes, it will appear to you that you need a great care and diligence in making them, if you look to Religions loss in the breach of Vowes, or its gain in a faithful performance of them, the care will appear double; if you look to your obligation under which you are to perform them, it will appear yet further needful, that you be very wary and circumspectly careful how you make them; the rash and inconsiderate person who cares not how he makes, will not care whether he perform his Vowes. And what a reproach is this to his Religion? what a provocation is this to his God, to destroy either him, or the works of his hand? And all these bespeak your care, and advise you to circumspection in this case. Do you not find it hard enough to discern what is daily and ordinarily to be done under daily and ordinary occurrence? are you not in great care to frame your selves fitly and comely to every dayes business you have to do among men, especially when you come within the tie of a promise to them? How solicitous are you, what, and when, and on what terms you promise? How you shall perform, and so keep your word and credit? Any competent measure of honesty, and regard to reputation will make a man consider what he promiseth to a man, How much more care should he use in promising unto God, where the promise is more than ordinary, where the tie is so indissoluble, where the demand is so punctually and peremptorily made; where the danger so great in making default. Let me commend unto thy more than ordinary care these two things, if thou wilt make a Vow so well framed as to set up Religion.

First, Be careful that thy Vow of obedience for, and in consideration of a mercy hoped or received, hold weight with that mercy, keep a steady hand, and get an even ballance and weigh the mercy which commands thy obedience, and weigh thy Vow which promiseth it. It will be thy reproach and Religions reproach to have thy Vow found a *shekel*, when thy mercy weighs a *talent*; when God gives a full harvest, thou must not Vow a handful or one sheaf. This were to expose thy God to contempt, and it would be a practical denial of his bounty to thee. *Jacob* observed this proportion, *Gen. 28. v. Heb.*

ככך

Talentum He-
braeorum con-
tinet pondus
3000 siclos.
Brewerwood de
ponderibus.

20, 21, 22. *God shall be his God,* and then *the rem of all he hath shall be his.* Davids, *For all his benefits,* is as much as *according to all his benefits,* and that speaks proportion and commensurateness. Take care to this, for others will observe, and enquire into it. They will weigh these two, thy mercy, and thy gratitude, do thou do it first, lest thou be ashamed, lest God be provoked, and thou be punished, for as good a man, and as great as thou who ere thou art, who readest this, met with all these, with shame, with the anger of his God, and with a punishment too on him for want of this. See *Hezekiah's* fault and punishment, 2 *Chron.* 32. 25. Don't fall short of * *Heathens*, who knew this and observed it as their rule, and have branded such who deviate from it, be careful thou put not off a mercy that lives many years with thee with a dayes entertainment, or weeks, or months lodging with thee.

* παρὰ τὸ
δοῦνα. Sordidum & ienu-
em sumptum
hoc adagio sig-
nificabant.
Erasim. Ada-
gior. chil. 2.
cent. 7. ad. 35.

Secondly, *Be careful that thou make thy Vow so, that they may be thy witnesses whom God makes,* be careful thou make them witnesses of thy performing, whom God made witnesses of thy streits, and thou madest witnesses of thy Vowes. A man that would have his credit in his truth to his word kept up, would choose them witnesses of his performing, who were witnesses of his promise; I think *David* took this heed in his rendring and paying his Vowes, *I will do it* (saith he) *now in the presence of his people,* *Vers.* 14. The people were witnesses to his streights, Prayers and Vowes, and he will honour Religion by performing in their sight what he sealed, signed and delivered, what he Vowed to the Lord. *Seek not more than providence makes conscious to thy Vowes lest this be interpreted ostentation,* and vain, self-glorying, *take so many, lest the good example be lost, or thou suspected of falsifying thy Vow.* Briefly and plainly, dost thou on a sick bed make thy Vow before thy Family? before the Neighbourhood? be careful to perform it before them, let them see thou art what thou Vowedst to be. This care in thy Vow will be a means to make it most to the advantage of Religion, whilst all that heard or knew thy Vow, bear thee testimony that thou art thankful; and more thou seekest not, lest thou be suspected to be proud: thus Religions gratitude and humility are set forth; thus thou givest others occasion to glorifie thy Father who is in Heaven.

Use 2.

Do well advised and composed Vowes so much promote Religion, when well and faithfully kept: are they also such sacred and inviolable bonds? *Then look what Vowes you are under, look how you have performed them.* It is time to view what you fairly promised for advancing

vancing of Religion, and what you have faithfully performed for its real advantage. Christian consider with thy self, wast thou ever in more than ordinary distress? didst thou not then Vow largely? tell me what were thy Vowes? how hast thou paid them? wast thou ever in a poor, needy condition? didst thou not then Vow to honour God with thy increase, to enrich the poor, to relieve thine indigent brethren, and Gods poor Children? Now what hast thou done? who are clothed out of thy flock? who are fed at thy table? who are lodged at thy charge? where's thy paying thy Vow? was it ever thy lot to be tossed at Sea? to be mounted up to the Heavens? to be cast down again into the depths? to be at thy wits end? didst thou not then Vow, if ever God should command, and make it a calm, and bring thee to thy desired Haven, thou would'st be more circumspect in all manner of conversation, more vigilant to thy particular duty? more severe against thy particular sin? Didst thou not Vow that an Anniversary Sermon, with an allowance to the Poor, or a constant Lecture, or an Almes-house, or some such great standing Monument, should commemorate Gods goodness to thee, and perswade others to trust and seek unto that goodness? or at least if thy Estate would not do so much, hast thou not Vowed to do according to thy power? where now is thy paying these Vowes? But I was never poor, never at Sea: may be so, yet art thou not under some Vowes for some other mercies? wast thou never in danger of losing thy Estate, thy Relations, thy life? Didest thou never lie dangerously and (men thought) desperately sick? hast thou no sick-bed Vowes upon thee? stay here whoever thou art that reade'st these lines, and read not a word more, until thou hast duely considered whether ever thou hast been dangerously sick? and what thou then Vowedst? and how thou hast performed?

The proud contemner of Religion learns by his dangerous sickness to promise to be religious, wast thou ever such? didst thou ever so Vow? and art thou now what thou didst then promise? The prophane swearer and blasphemers is brought by a sickness to fear his Oath, and to Vow to learn to fear and abstain. Oh then, if God will not destroy, and damn, but give life! he will, that he will repent, and amend; he will bless, but not blaspheme his Name; he will never more prophanely swear, and curse, wast thou ever such a one? so sinful? so engaged? what performance now? The Drunkard Vowes sobriety when he is sick; the Adulterer Vowes chastity; the worldling Vowes to mind Heaven; the Tradesman who hath so of-

ten

ten fold his conscience at every price to gain six pence, by an untruth and lye, then if this plunge be out-lived, will keep a good conscience. In a word, *A sick bed makes a sinner sick of his sin, and seldom fails to make him Vow against it.* Now Reader what thinkest thou? Vowes or no Vowes? art thou under any or no? I am perswaded now thou canst not deny it; methinks I could believe I heard thee say, such a Fever, such an Ague, the finall Pox, a Surfet, the Pestilence, or some such disease, made me Vow to be another man, to destroy sin, to exercise grace, to love God, to hate lust, to be holy and heavenly. Now thou seest thy bond, where is thy payment of thy debt? Oh how few do well keep any, how much fewer do well keep their sick bed Vowes, as if these Vowes were as sickly as their makers, and doomed to as short a life as the sick Votary thought he had been doomed to. Reader thy conscience tells thee what thou canst answer, or what thou must confess in this matter, and upon thy consciences answer I have advice for thee if thou art conscious.

1. *Of total neglect, go Speedily on thy knees, bless infinite patience, humble thy self before infinite grace, get out thy pardon, and whilst God saith by me, by these lines defer not to pay, be thou honest to thy word, thankful to thy God, advantageous to Religion, and an example of reformation, lest next sickness be thy death, and thy Vowes be thy sin, which shut out thy hopes of praying and speeding: God delights not to answer such fools, thou maist find Motives enough to hasten thee to this duty, from Eccl. 5. 2, 4, 5, 6, which I commend to thy thoughts with these Quaries.*

1. *Is not God in Heaven and thou on earth.*

2. *And, Is not thy Vow made to this great God?*

3. *And, Is not this Vow thy voluntary debt? And*

4. *Doth God require present payment? Or indeed*

5. *Wilt thou worse thy condition by Vowing? Or*

6. *Wilt thou provoke Gods anger and displeasure?*

7. *Dar'st thou venture on threatned destruction?*

These are Solomon's Motives to a punctual and present payment of Vowes; I offer them to awake thee from neglect of thy Vowes.

Or, Secondly, *Hast thou Vowed? and performed in part but not fully? hast thou done somewhat! but not all of that thou hast promised, and Vowed? I advise,*

1. *See what hindred, wast thou rash in promising more than thou could'st*

couldst do, is this the reason thou didst not all, because some of it was out of thy power; thou must be humbled for thy rash vow, and if ever it comes within thy power, do it.

2. *See whether thy sloth and negligence did not hinder, when thou mightest have performed*, but now it is out of thy power, and thou canst not, this is a high breach of thy Vows, and I know no way for thee, but due and seasonable repentance, and confessing, that God may pardon thee, and be thou better in what thou canst, since thou canst not be so good in this as thou shouldest.

3. *See whether it continue yet in thy power to do, though as yet thou hast not done it*, and if so, be affected with the sight of thy unthankfulness, but remove this sin by performing thy Vows, for God will not release the promise, nor cancell the bond, until the debt be paid by him who hath power in his hand, and may do it.

But, *What if it were in my power when I vowed, but since that time Providence hath put it out of my power*; I was rich, when I vowed to relieve the poor, but when I was recovered, God suffered me to be spoiled, as Job was, what shall I do then?

1. *Thy Vow well composed, engaged thee, so far as it was in thy power.* Sol. 1. Remember, a well-advised Vow hath this express condition, or this implied, so far, and so long as it is in my power to do, untill I have done all. The tenth of all I have, of all that God shall give me, saith Jacob, I will give to God. Now if the Lord exercise his bounty to Jacob, Jacob is engaged, then he hath power, and can do it: if God make Jacob poor, the limitation his Vow implied in it doth quit him.

Secondly, *So far as God puts it out of thy power, so far he releaseth thee from the debt.* Sol. 2. When God, by his Providence over-ruling all, doth disable thee to the payment; then he dischargeth thee from the bond, this is Gods real discharge, and cancelling of the Obligation.

Are well composed Vows such promoters of Religion? and are they to be made so warily? and do they bind so strictly? *Then be sure to wait until God give you just and fit seasons for Vowing*, be not over-hasty to Vow, it is an inconsiderate and foolish haste of Christians, to make more occasions of Vowing, than God doth make for them; *Make your Vows, and spare not, so often as God bids you, but do not do it oftner*; you would wonder I should dissuade from Vowing often, when you have such constant mercies, and wonder well you might, if God did expect your extraordinary bond and security

curity for every ordinary mercy; but he requires it not, he is content with ordinary security of gratitude for ordinary mercies, when he calls for extraordinary security and acknowledgment, by giving extraordinary mercies, then give it, and do it.

1. *Cheerfully, enter such bonds willingly.*

2. *Pay the bond punctually at its time.*

3. *Pay it fully, in the whole of it, so do it, that you may say, I will cheerfully, and of choice, so do it, that that you may call it a paying punctually and fully.* And this will be accounted a rendering to the Lord, and a real promoting of Religion, by setting forth our debt, and the Lords goodness, to which we are indebted; Fear not to give thy God double security when he requires it. Fail not to pay readily and fully, when pay day comes, for the Lord doth expect and command thee so to do, and if thou do wilfully make default, he will lay folly to thy charge, and take the forfeiture of thy bond, and make thee know it too, some way or other to thy grief and trouble; keep out so long, or get out of such debts so soon as thou canst. Pay the Lord thy Vows.



How are we Compleat in Christ?

Col. 3. last clause of vers. 11.

But Christ is all, and in all.

THe great concernment of lost creatures, is above all things to mind salvation, this is the *one thing needful*, this should be the great *enquiry*, and in the neglect of this, all our other endeavours are no better than laborious trifles. The great danger which even they are in, who seriously mind salvation, is, lest they build upon some sandy foundation, seeking Heaven in those wayes which lead not thither. The great design of Satan is, either to detain poor undone creatures in a total neglect of salvation, or to deceive them in the way and means thereof: 'tis therefore the great care of the Apostle, as in other Scripture, so in this, not only to undeceive the world, as to those mistakes which prevailed then, but to point out the right, the proper, the onely sure way of salvation, viz. through Christ, whom he here declares to be so compleat a Saviour, that as we have *none other*, so we need none other, because *Christ is all*. Luke 10. 41. A.C. 16. 30. A.C. 4. 11.

In the former part of the verse, the Apostle shews the insufficiency of all things on this side Christ, to commend us unto God, or stand us instead in the matter of salvation, and this he does by removing four mistakes (at that time) common.

1. The mistake of the *Jews*, who prided themselves in a genealogical kind of sanctity, as being the seed of *Abraham*, this they account so great a matter, that they cannot be perswaded it could go otherwise than well with them: let the Messengers of God tell them their sins, warn them of their dangers, yet they shelter themselves under this privilege, as that which would be a sufficient bulwark against all kind of threats and comminations: and though

Mat. 3. 9. *John* the Baptist in his time; our Saviour in his time; and the Apostles in theirs, do all concur in taking them off from leaning upon this broken reed; yet will they not be beaten out of these strong holds. Time was indeed when salvation was of the *Jews*; but that wall of partition being now taken down, and the pale of the Church so far enlarged, as to take in both *Jew* and *Gentile*, *Act. 10. 34.* no National privilege can now commend us unto God; nor can a succession of *Abraham*, according to the flesh, avail us, unless we succeed him in his faith.

2. The mistake of the circumcised, whether *Jews* or Proselytes; vvhoe, because they had this badge of Religion upon them, concluded themselves in a priority for Heaven, before all the vvhorld besides. But howeuer time vvas vvhhen Circumcision vvas an Ordinance of that necessity, that the Lord threatens to punish the neglect thereof, by cutting off that soul from among his people: yet vvas it not the outvvard but spiritual part, God accounted of. The Apostle in excluding this, excludes all outvvard religious Observations, as *Dave-*
nant in loc.

Gen. 17. 14. 3. The mistake of the *Grecians*, who were at that time the Masters of all Learning; and all other Nations in contradistinction unto them, were stiled *Barbarians*; and of all *Barbarians*, the *Scythians* were esteemed the rudest. But whatever worth and excellency may be in humane accomplishments, yet all these, in the business of salvation, are but poor matters. 'Tis neither the having nor wanting of these, that can considerably advantage or prejudice us in that high concernment.

4. The common mistake of the world; vvho from their rank and quality in the world, are ready to promise themselves a more easie acceptance with God. But *God is no respecter of persons*: He looks upon the children of men with *another kind of eye*, than man is used to do. Whether our outward condition be high or mean, there's nothing of privilege or disadvantage from hence, in respect of salvation.

And as in the former clause of the Verse, the Apostle shews the insufficiency of all things besides Christ; so in this clause he shews the single sufficiency of Christ alone. Whatever the *Jews* promised themselves from their stock and lineage; the Proselytes from their Circumcision; the *Grecians* from their vvishdom and learning; the great ones of the world from their outward prehemini-
cies, all that, yea, and much more, is Christ to Believers. *Christ is All*.

This

Rom. 2. 29.
Circumcisio-
rat in Judaica
Religione ritus
praeceptis adhi-
bitur, itaque
ad designan-
dam observati-
onem omnium
rituum Lega-
lium.
1 Cor. 1. 26.
27. Act. 10. 34.
1 Sam. 16. 7.

This single sufficiency of Christ, the Apostle proves by a double Argument.

1. The compleatness and perfection of Christ as a Saviour, *He is*

All. Take salvation from first to last, in all the several parts of it, he is Heb. 12. 2, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginner and perfecter, the Author and finisher of all.

2. The way and means whereby Christ imparts and communicates this salvation, it is by being in all. Some read the words as an amplification of the fulness and compleatness of Christ, *Christ is All*, and that in *all things* that concern either our present comfort, or eternal happiness. Others refer these words *In all*, to those divers sorts of persons spoke of in the former part of this Verse; to whom, that Christ may be a Saviour, he disdains not to take up his dwelling in their souls, though lying under all the disadvantages which were then accounted prejudicial. And thus the Apostle seems to explain himself, Gal. 3. 28. a parallel Scripture unto this. And according to this Exposition, as the benefit of Christs sufficiency is extended to all believers by virtue of their union unto him, so is it restrained and locked up from all unbelievers.

The Case to be insisted on from this Scripture is, *How Christians are compleat in Christ?* For the resolving hereof, take this natural deduction from the words;

Dost. That Christ is a Christians All. By Christian I mean, not them who have nothing more to declare them such, than only their Baptisms and outward professions, as the Church of *Sardis*, Rev. 3. 1. We account them Monsters in nature, who have the faces of men, but in their other limbs, the lineaments and proportions of brute beasts; and how can we account them better than Monsters in Christianity, who have the faces of Christians indeed, but withall the hearts and lives of Pagans. That *All* which is in Christ, is nothing unto such, except to encrease their guilt, and heighten their condemnation. But by the *Christian*, I mean him who is *γεννητός, an Israelite* indeed, as Christ speaks concerning *Nathanael*, & *malis colitur*. Joh. 1. 48. One who labours more to be than seem religious; one whose great care is, that his heart may keep an even pace with his tongue, in all his outward professions; now to such Christ is *All*. In having an interest in him, they have enough for the supply of all wants; for the prevention of all dangers; for the procuring all good: And therefore what the Apostle speaks here in one word, *Christ is All*, he speaks at large, in an enumeration of several weighty

weighty particulars, I Cor. 1. 30. *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.* We are foolish creatures; *Christ is wisdom*: We are guilty; He is *righteousness*: We are polluted; He is *sanctification*: We are lost and undone; but in him is *redemption*: We are empty of all good; but He is a full fountain, from whom flow all those blessings which concern either our present comfort, or future happiness: We are necessitous and indigent; in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. 2. 3. Yea, in him dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are compleat in him, Col. 2. 9, 10. Or as you have it, Col. 1. 19. In him dwells all fulness. The rich Merchant thought himself no loser by the bargain, in parting with all he had to purchase an interest in Christ, *Matth. 13. 45, 46.* But when never so much is said, there cannot a greater word be used than what the Apostle speaks here, *Christ is All.* The Greeks were wont of old to account it an excellency to speak much in few words; to give their Auditors *πῶλον ἢ περὶ μὲν ἢ περὶ πάντων*, an Ocean of matter in a drop of words. Thus does the Apostle here give us (as I may speak) gold in the wedge; which I shall endeavour to beat out into the leaf, by shewing how much is comprized in this one word *All.* The two names by which the most ancient Philosophers were wont to speak of God were, that he was, *τὸ ὄν* ἢ *τὸ αἰν*, the true being and the universal good; all the scattered excellencies which are dispersed among several ranks of creatures, meeting in him, as the lines of the Circumference in the Center; This does the Apostle speak here of Christ, *He is All.* Physicians speak of an universal medicine suited to all diseases, and helpful in all maladies: but whether this can be found in nature or not; yet certainly Christ is a *Panacea*, in him we have a plaister for all sores, a remedy against all distempers. There are indeed thousands of cases wherein all other helps are but *miserable comforters*, and *Physicians of no value*: but not one case wherein Christ is not a full and proper help. When all that friends can do, is to pity us, he can help us; because *Christ is All.*

For the further explaining and confirming of this great truth, three things shall be spoke to,

1. Wherein Christ is All.
2. How Christ is All.
3. What advantage it is to sincere Christians, to have their All in Christ.

1. Wherein Christ is All. In general, He is All in All things; for

for so some of no small account render the following words, and in *All*, as hath already been hinted. But more particularly,

1. Christ is All to sincere Christians, to free them from whatever might hinder their salvation. *Salvation* is not a meet negative thing, nor does it consist in a bare exemption from hell and wrath, but a translation into heaven and glory; but alas! betwixt us and glory, there is *abyssus*, a great Gulph, many bars and impediments; aye but Christ is All to deliver us from these; and though our deliverance in this world is not compleat or perfect, yet is it so far compleat as to render our salvation undoubtful, if we be in the number of them to whom Christ is here said to be All.

1. The wrath of an offended God, which, like that flaming sword that kept our Apostate Parents from returning into Paradise (out of which, because of their Apostacy they had been ejected) would render our admission into heaven equally impossible; but Christ, by bearing the wrath of God in his own person, hath taken it off from ours; and therefore he is said to *deliver us from the wrath to come*, 1 *Theff.* 1. 10. He who was the Son of Gods love, became the subject of his displeasure, as appears by comparing *Math.* 3. 17. with *Isa.* 53. 10. that we who were children of wrath, might become the objects of his favour; and however Christ hath not delivered believers from the anger of God as a Father, yet from the anger of God as a Judge. There is an anger that proceeds from love, as the anger of a Parent towards that child whose good he desires; and there is a vindictive anger; the former believers are neither freed *Heb.* 12. 6, 7, from, nor would it indeed be their privilege; there is not a greater judgment can befall poor sinful creatures here on earth, than for God not to discover himself angry with them for their sins, *Isa.* 1. 5. God then deals with men as a skilful Physician with an unruly Patient, whom he gives up as desperate, or as a tender Parent with a graceless child, whom he utterly rejects. In a word, whatever kind of anger might tend to the prejudice of believers, that they are delivered from, but what is for their advantage that they are subject to. That Christ is All in delivering from the wrath of God may further be evidenced by these Considerations:

1. The adequate of Gods wrath is sin; there is this difference twixt wrath and mercy in God; that mercy flows (as I may so speak) naturally from God; and hath no other motive but onely the gracious and merciful disposition of God; but wrath hath alwayes its rise from us, and nothing in us but sin can draw down his wrath

*Magna ira est
quando peccan-
tibus non iras-
citur Deus.*
Hieron.

wrath upon us. Our meanness cannot, our afflictions cannot; these may sometimes be the effects of Gods wrath, but never the causes. No, 'tis because of these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience, Eph. 5. 6. because of these things. i. e. because of these sins, as appears from the Verses fore-going. What is it that hath filled every age and place of the world with so many dreadful tokens of Gods displeasure, but onely sin? What was it that cast the Angels out of Heaven, and degraded them from their first station, but onely sin? What was it that drove our first Parents out of Paradise, and subjected them, and all their Posterity to so many miseries, but onely sin? What was it that brought destruction upon the old World, upon *Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim*? What was it that broke off the natural branches, and hath for so many hundreds of years continued them under a divorce from God, but onely sin? In a word, look over all those miseries under which the whole Creation groans, Rom. 8. 22. And though those miseries in several creatures are divers, yet do they all proceed from the same fountain, viz. Sin.

2. Christ is All, in making expiation for sin. He is that *Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world*, John 1. 29. He is our *ἁγνισμὸς & ἱλαστήριον*, 1 Joh. 2. 2. Rom. 3. 25. 'twas not thousands of Rams, or ten thousands of Rivers of Oyl, could have born any proportion in point of satisfaction for our sins. 'Twas not all the Legal Sacrifices of old could do any thing, nor can all our duties now: but Christ is All in expiating for sin, Heb. 10. 5, 6, 7. compared with Heb. 10. 14. And such is the fulness of Christs satisfaction, that he hath not onely freed such as are united unto him from *condemnation*, Rom. 8. 1. but purchased for them the Adoption of children, Rom. 8. 14, 15, 16. And thus Christ is All in removing this bar, and opening this door to salvation, which (had it not been for his mediation) would for ever have remained shut against all the children of men. The pollution and prevalency of corruption, how great an impediment this is to salvation and happiness, was typified by the Lepers and unclean persons of old, who were not admitted within the *Camp*. Heaven is no common receptacle for all persons, as *Noah's Ark* was for all sorts of creatures, *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. Know ye not? if you know any thing in Religion, you cannot but know thus much. In the Church of God on earth, there is a mixture of *Corn with Chaff*, of *Wheat with Tares*, of good Fish with bad, of
Sheep

Sheep with Goats; but there shall be a separation of the precious from the vile, and God will come with his *Fan in his hand and thoroughly purge his floor*, Luke 3. 17. Do but consider and pause a while upon that mischief which sin hath done poor creatures by its pollution. How hath it stained their glory? cast them down from their excellency? turned Angels into Devils, and debased man, who was once almost the top of the whole Creation, in whom all the scattered Excellencies in the Book of Nature were bound up together in one Volume, and met together in a blessed union. How unlike hath sin made us to what God at first made us? Those souls of ours which were once as so many pure beams of Light, how is the beauty of them now blotted and darkned? But Christ is that *Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness*, Zech. 13. 1. in his blood is virtue enough to fetch out *scarlet spots*, and *crimson stains*, Isa. 1. 18. and if any of the children of men perish in their pollutions, 'tis not because he wants sufficiency, but because they want faith. Christ is *All* in the business of cleansing and purifying. But alas, besides John 3. 16. the pollution of sin, there is the prevalency of it. This was to St. Paul so great an affliction, that he who could bear the greatest of outward afflictions patiently, 2 Cor. 11. 23, 24, 25, &c. cannot but expends something of an holy impatience under this burden, Rom. 7. 24. he that could triumph over *Principalities, Powers, Life, Death, &c.* Rom. 8. 38, 39. is yet more than a little discouraged when he reflects upon the corruptions he found lodging in his own heart. Corruption is the great Tyrant that hath usurped over the whole world, the bounds of its Dominion are almost as large as all mankind, there is not a man in all the world (except the first man Adam made after Gods Image, and the second Adam who was God as well as man, but he is born a slave, a vassal to this Usurper. The four great successive Monarchies, *Chaldaean, Persian, Grecian, Roman*, though the extent of them were great, and the circumference vast, yet were all these limited and bounded, some parts of the world there were which knew nothing of their yoke. But alas the Empire of Corruption reaches every corner of the earth, every person born into the world. We may therefore not usefully compare it to *Nebuchadnezzar's Tree*, Dan. 4. 11. the top whereof reaches Heaven, from thence it threw the Angels, and the boughs thereof spreading themselves to the ends of the earth; yea, this vassallage unto Corruption, as it is the largest and universalest, so also the miserablest, and most dreadful. All other slaveries compared

pared with this, are but like *Rehoboams* Government compared to his Father *Solomons*; the *least finger* of whose Dominion, he threatens, should be *heavier than his Fathers legs*, 1 King 12. 10. We read in Scripture of an *Egyptian* slavery; in History of the *Spartan* slavery, and of the *Turkish*, all these sad and lamentable; but yet all these reached but the body, and that for a time only, whereas the slavery of Corruption reaches the soul, and that for ever, unless Christ become our Jesus in saving us from our sins, *Mat.* 1. 21. He hath purchased our freedome, and that with a great summe, as the Centurion speaks of his *Roman* freedome, *Act.* 22. 26, 27, 28. There are none can say with St. *Paul*, they are born free, except they who are born again, and they are free indeed, *Joh.* 8. 36. Christ is All in removing this impediment also, in setting our poor captive souls at liberty, from the bonds and fetters of our corruption, *Rom.* 6. 6, 7, 8, &c. *Rom.* 7. 25. 'Tis he alone can conquer these great *Goliaths*, these untamed affections; but yet even this deliverance is also incompleat in this world, he delivers his people from corruption as to the reign and dominion of it, though not as to the presence and disturbance of it, *ut non regnet sed nondum non sit*.

3. The oppositions of Satan, his wiles and subtilties, these are another impediment, and that no small one neither; for if our first Parents in whom there was nothing of ignorance, but a sufficiency of knowledge, there was indeed a nescience of many things, so is there also in the Angels, *Mat.* 24. 36. but yet their knowledge was both full and clear in things necessary and pertinent, *Col.* 3. 10. This was no small advantage against the methods of Satan, because his usual way of mischieving poor creatures hath not been so much by force as fraud, nor as a Lyon, but as a Serpent, not so much by conquering, as cheating; acting all his enmity under a pretence of friendship, and tempting us to no evil, but under the pretence of some good. The advantage of our first Parents was in this respect great, in respect of their knowledge. Besides in them was nothing of weakness, but a sufficiency of strength, in them was nothing of corruption, but an universal rectitude and uprightness. The wayes by which Satan ordinarily prevails, is either by our ignorance, or by our weakness, or else by making a party within us against our selves. The advantages of our first Parents were in all these respects far greater than any have against Satan now, yet Satan prevailed against them. What cause therefore have we to fear, *2 Cor.* 12. 3.

But

But *Christ is all* to free us from these dangers, to carry us through these oppositions, who *hath led captivity captive*, Ephes. 4. 8. *Who hath spoiled Principalities and powers, and triumphed over them*, Col. 2. 15. but yet even this deliverance is at present incomplete; for, though Christ hath delivered Believers from Satan as a *destroyer*, yet not from Satan as a *tempter*, he may disquiet such, but he cannot ruine them.

4. The disturbances and interruptions of a prophane world, its allurements, discouragements, promises, threats, smiles, frowns, our difficulties and dangers from hence cannot be little, since the people of God in all ages have found them so great: the great advantage which all these outward things have against us, is their suitability to our senses; for though believers are said *to live by faith*, Heb. 10. 38. yet the best of men have had something to witness they were but men *of like passions*; as 'twas said of *Elias*, James 5. 17. but *Christ is all* to free us from these dangers; *Joh. 16. 33. Be of good cheer I have overcome the world: He hath overcome it for us, and in some measure in us.*

2. *Christ is All*, to fill the souls of believers with all that good which may capacitate and qualifie them for happiness: it is the decree of Heaven, that none be admitted into glory, but those on whom God hath wrought the truth of grace; Heaven must first be brought down into our souls, before our souls are capable of ascending up thither: we must first *be made meet*, before we can *partake of that inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12. with *Ephes. 5. 3.* we are by nature unmeet, because we are carnal and earthly; and should God dispence with his own decree, and open so wide a door unto Heaven and happiness, as to let in carnal and sensual persons, Heaven would be no Heaven unto such; carnal hearts can never relish the sweetness of spiritual enjoyments. Philosophers ob-Rom. 8. 6, 7. serve, that all delight arises from a suitability betwixt the person and the object. What is the reason of that diversity of delights which is among the children of men, that which is one mans joy is another mans grief, and that which is one mans pleasure is another mans pain? the only reason is, because of the diversity of tempers and dispositions: Some there be of such a brutish and swinish temper, that nothing is so pleasing unto them as wallowing in the mire of their sensualities: others again of so refined a temper that they esteem these sensual pleasures very low and much beneath them, but still every mans delight is according to his temper and disposition,

and therefore Heaven would be so far from being a Heaven unto such, that it would be a kind of Hell to them; for as delight arises from an harmony betwixt the person and the object, so all kind of torment from an unsuitableness and contrariety: hence is it, that although God vouchsafes us something of Heaven here on earth, viz. in his Ordinances, yet to unheavenly hearts every thing of this nature is a *tedium*, a burden: *When will the new Moon be gone that we may sell Corn: and the Sabbath that we may set forth wheat*, &c. Amos 8. 5. *Ælian* reports of one *Nicostratus*, who being a skilful Artificer and finding a curious piece of Art, was so much taken therewith, that a spectator beholding him so intent in viewing the workmanship, asked him what pleasure he could take in gazing so long upon such an object? he answers, *hadst thou my eyes thou wouldst be as much ravished as I am*. So may we say of carnal persons, had they the hearts and dispositions of believers, they would be as much delighted with all means of communion with God as they are, and account that their priviledge which now they esteem their vexation: the Greeks tell us, that *Καλόν* good, is derived *ἀπὸ τοῦ καλεῖν*, from calling, because all good is of an attractive and magnetick nature, to draw forth and call our affections after it; but yet 'tis not the intrinsic excellency of any object that renders it taking with us, but our affections are accordingly exercised upon all kind of objects, as representations are of those objects from the understanding, for 'tis the understanding which sits at the stern of the soul, that is the *primum mobile*, the master-wheel that puts the affections as so many lesser wheels upon motion; therefore unless our judgements be both enlightned and sanctified, we can never approve the things that are excellent. Naturalists observe, that though the Loadstone hath an attractive virtue to draw Iron to it, yet it cannot exercise that virtue upon Iron that's rusty. Ignorance is the rust of the soul, that blunts the edge of our affections to whatsoever is spiritually good: there must be therefore some kind of suitableness and harmony betwixt our souls and heavenly mercies, before we are capable of tasting the sweetness of them. Now *Christ is All* to believers in this respect also, 'tis from his fulness they receive and grace for grace, Joh. 1. 16. That we have any thing of grace it is from him, and that we have such a degree or measure of grace it is from him: *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*, Joh. 10. 10. the essence and the abundance are both from him. All those miracles which Christ wrought in the dayes of his

his flesh upon the bodies of poor creatures, in restoring sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, life to the dead, all these does Christ work over again upon the souls of them whom he prepares for Heaven.

3: Christ is All to fill all Ordinances with power and efficacy; these are the means of salvation, and through his concurrence effectual means, as they are his institutions, we are under an obligation of using them; and as they have the promise of his presence, we are warranted in our expectations of benefit from them: but yet Ordinances are but empty pipes, but dry breasts, unless Christ be pleased to fill them, who filleth All in All, Ephes. 1. 23. That there should be such a might and efficacy in things so weak, such miraculous and strange effects by means so inconsiderable, that the foolishness of preaching should be powerful to salvation, 'tis because it is not man but God that speaks. *Joh. 5. 25. The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* Look upon Ordinances in themselves and so they are *res et verba, things that are not*; but as they are accompanied with the power of Christ, so they bring to nought things that are, 1 Cor. 1. 28. 'Tis he who in Baptism baptises with the Holy Ghost and with fire, *Matth. 3. 11.* 'Tis he in preaching the Word, speaks not only to the ear but the heart, *Luke 24. 32. Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* In a word, Christ is All in every Ordinance in respect of efficacy; whiles the Disciples fished alone they caught nothing, but when Christ is with them, the draught of fishes is so great they are scarce able to draw it, *Joh. 21. 3, 6.*

4: Christ is All to fill every condition with comfort, the best of conditions is not good without him, nor is the worst bad with him. *Alexander* accounted himself to live so many dayes as he obtained victories: but *David* accounts himself to live more in one dayes communion with God, than in a thousand dayes enjoyment of all earthly comforts, *Psal. 84. 10. yea in the midst of all his earthly confluences, he looks upon all as nothing in comparison of communion with God, Psal. 73. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Though he had a Kingdom he values not that; and well might *David* be of this mind, for could we adde Kingdom to Kingdom, and world to world, yet all these in comparison of the least smile or love-token from God, are no better than nothing, for *thy loving kindness is better than life,*

Ephes. 5. 8.
Ephes. 2. 5, 10.

Matth. 23. 29.
Matth. 18. 20.

1 Cor. 1. 28.

*Ubi bene sine
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all these in comparison of the least smile or love-token from God,
are no better than nothing, for thy loving kindness is better than life,*

*Now dicis mihi
habet sed nihil
concupisco,
Mule. in loc.*

Psal.

Pfal. 63. 3. The ancient Philosophers distinguished betwixt *bona* *Kale'w'm*, and *bona* *nald* *thun*, some things good in their own nature, thus onely God, *Matth. 19. 17.* *There is none good but one, that is God*: others good by way of opinion or estimation, and thus all the Comforts of this life; whence that maxime of the Stoicks, *βίη καλὴ-ψη*, life is but opinion and phancie, and whatever good is in these things, is but like those pictures of most deformed and monstrous creatures, which the Poet tells us had no other beauty than what they owed to the Painters courtesie, *viz.* the off-spring of our own phancies: Those who were vertuous, were only by the Philosophers accounted to live, others might *degere*, but not *vivere*, they might be, but they could not live. The onely true comfort of life consists in living in communion with God, 'tis his presence fills Heaven with all its glory, and 'tis his presence that fills every condition with all its sweetness: But alas, *how can two walk together except they be agreed?* and what agreement can there be betwixt light and darkness, the glorious Majesty of Heaven and sinful dust, but only through a Mediator? and the only Mediator is *Jesus Christ*. What was it that enabled the blessed Martyrs, to account the scorching flames to be beds of Roses? What was it that enabled *St. Paul* to triumph over all kind of adversaries? but only the love of God in Christ *Jesus*; herein alone consists our comfort, our happiness. Now *Christ is All* in this respect also.

5. *Christ is All*, in furnishing us with strength and assistance to persevere: the way to Heaven is no smooth or easie way, but beset with many difficulties, *ἡ βασιλεία ὁδοῦ*, *Matth. 7. 14.* and through many tribulations must we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Act. 14. 22.* yea though the calmness of our passage through this world should be in a perfect serenity from all outward enemies, yet can we not expect a total freedom from the worst of enemies, our own hearts, our corruptions. All the prejudices and mischiefs we either do or can suffer from others, are nothing to what we suffer from ourselves, 'tis not *homo homini lupus*, but *homo sibi lupus*, men are to none such Wolves as to their own souls. Now in as much as the Crown of happiness is reserved for the head of perseverance, and in as much as perseverance is conflicting with such kind of adversaries, as though we conquer them, yet they are in us, and though we vanquish them, yet still we carry them about us, must needs require a greater strength than our own: it cannot but be esteemed an eminent privilege, to be under the continual supplies of Christ by his Spirit,

Spirit, that after we have put our hand to Gods plough we may not ^{Luke 9. 26.} look back, and after we have begun in the Spirit, we may not end in ^{Gal. 3. 3.} the flesh. I speak not this as doubting the perseverance of them who are sincere, but as declaring the true foundation on which their perseverance is bottom'd, viz. not any inherent strength they have in themselves, but those supplies of grace and strength they continually derive from Christ: there is a vast difference 'twixt the best of Christians considered singly in themselves, and considered relatively in respect of their union unto Christ: in themselves so weak and impotent that they can do nothing, Joh. 15. 5. not sufficient ^{Non dicit, parum potius facere, vel difficius potius facere, vel nihil potius perfectum, sed nihil facere.} themselves to think any thing as of themselves, 2 Cor. 3. 5. and yet what can be less than to think? but in Christ mighty and powerful, able to do and bear whatever God would have them, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me, Phil. 4. 13. and thus is Christ the Christians All, thus are they compleat in him. ^{Aug. in loc. Col. 2. 10.}

2. How Christ is all? The resolution of this Quære is therefore necessary, because many there are who instead of sucking milk from this Doctrine are ready to suck poyson; but for prevention of all dangerous and unsafe inferences from this great truth, consider

1. Negatively, how Christ is not All; not so as to excuse us from all endeavours in the use of means for working out our own salvation, Christs sufficiency does not excuse but ingage our industry: for thus the Apostle argues, Phil. 2. 12, 13. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, because it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do, q. d. it is God does all, therefore do you what you can.

2. Positively or affirmatively, and that in these two respects especially.

1. Christ is All by way of Impetration, in as much as our salvation was his purchase; we may say of our hopes, our helps, our advantages, as the Chief Priest said of the moneys which Judas had received for the hire of his perfidiousness: It is the price of blood, Matth. 27. 6. Whence is it that they who have brought themselves under the deserts of Hell, may have hopes of Heaven? enjoy the means of Heaven? taste the first fruits of Heaven? all are the price of Christs blood: 'twas by his own blood that he entred into Heaven himself, and hath opened the door to Heaven for all that are incorporated into him, Heb. 9. 12. Heb. 10. 19, 20. ^{Eph. 5. 25, 26. Act. 20. 28. John 15. 13.}

2. Christ is all by way of Application, in as much as he brings home the blessings he hath purchased unto the souls of his; he hath

not.

not only purchased salvation for *them*; but *them* for it; not only the possibility of Heaven, but a real propriety in it: and certainly propriety is absolutely necessary unto the refreshment of every comfort: What are all the treasures of either or both the *Indies*, to him who only hears of them? but meer stories. What all the glory of Heaven to him who is thrust from the enjoyment of them? but meer torments. There must be a propriety in all spiritual blessings before they can be refreshing: and this alone from Christ. *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto my self, that where I am ye may be there also.* And what is clearly asserted in these Scriptures, is strongly intimated in those emblems by which Christ is described. What the root is to the Tree, the Vine to the branches, the head to the body, all this is Christ to believers, viz. not only a treasury of all good, but a fountain continually streaming down all kind of spiritual blessings into their souls: and though faith be both the eye that discerns, and the hand that receives all from Christs fulness, yet 'tis he that by his Spirit works this grace in us. Faith is our *act*, but it is his *gift*; 'tis we that believe, but 'tis Christ enables us to believe: so that both in purchasing and applying salvation *Christ is All.*

John 10. 28.
John 14. 3.
Col. 2. 7.
John 15. 1, 5.
Eph. 1. 22, 23.

Gal. 5. 22.
Eph. 2. 8.
Phil. 1. 29.

3. What advantage is it to believers to have their *All* in Christ?
1. Because our salvation could have been in no hand so safe, so sure as in the hand of Christ: had it been in our hand by any inherent righteousness, our sad experience we have had of our own unfaithfulness, in sinning away that happiness wherein we were created, may cause us for ever to be jealous of our selves; but to have it in the hand of him who is mighty to save even to the utmost, who is so faithful that in all our distresses he is touched with our infirmities; we cannot be so sensible of our own miseries, but Christ is much more: and hence it is that as we have no other Saviour besides him, so is it impossible we should have any like unto him.

Psal. 89. 19.
Isa. 63. 1.
Heb. 4. 15.
Heb. 7. 25.

Act. 4. 12.

2. Because our salvation could have been in no way so comfortable, because as God hath the *glory* of every attribute, so have Christians the *comfort* of every attribute in *this way* of salvation; for as God hath the glory of his Justice from them (in their Head and surety) to whom in *this way* he shews mercy; *mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* Justice it self that dreadful attribute to guilty creatures, is in *this way* of salvation so far from being their enemy, that it becomes their friend, and

Psal. 85. 10.

and speaks nothing but what is to their encouragement. And hence it is that sincere believers have from the very justice of God, answered all manner of discouragements arising from their sins: *Who is he that condemneth, it is Christ that died* i. e. since God hath already received satisfaction from Christ, he cannot in justice requite it from the members of Christ; but is just in the justifying him that believeth in Jesus; and if we confess and forsake our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness: Thus hath the justice of God been their great support in the time of their outward dangers also, *Justice and Judgment are the habitation of his Throne*. In a word, this way of salvation (which was the contrivance of infinite wisdom, and is in it self so mysterious, that the Angels delight to look into it) does so fully correspond with the condition of poor, weak, sinful, mutable creatures, that it layes a double obligation of praise upon us, that salvation is possible, and that the way of salvation is so compleat and full.

Rom. 8. 34.

Rom. 3. 26.

Prov. 23. 13.

with Joh. 1. 9.

Psal. 89. 14.

The Doctrinal part of this Observation being thus cleared, one word by way of Application:

Use 1. If Christ be All, then is there no ground of despondency either from your own defectiveness, or the defectiveness of all creature helps. Your duties are defective; your endeavours defective; your very righteousness unsafe to confide in; But though you have nothing in your selves, yet if you have an interest in Christ, you need nothing more, because in Christ you have All.

Phil. 3. 9.

1. You have the summe of All. Though you have not estates, friends, worldly comforts; yet in Christ you have what does more than make up the want of all these. We may be as impatiently desirous of this and that earthly comfort, as Rachel was of children, whom we find quarrelling with Jacob, *Give me children, or else I dye*. But what Elkanah said to Hannah in the like condition, *Am I not better to thee than ten sons?* the same we may say much more to persons interested in Christ. Is not Christ better to you than all? The absence of the Cister may well be dispensed with, by him who lives at the Fountain, and the light of a Candle, by him who enjoys the Sun. All those seeming contradictions, which so frequently occur in Scripture, can no other wayes be reconciled, but by the acknowledgment of this, *E. gr. A father of the fatherless*: How can they be fatherless who have a father? Thus we read of them who were rich in the midst of poverty, who having nothing, possessed All things; joyful in the midst of sorrows, i. e. though they had

Gen. 30. 1.

1 Sam. 1. 8.

Psal. 68. 5.

Jam. 2. 5.

2 Cor. 6. 10.

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not

not these comforts, yet they had an interest in him who is infinitely more, and better than all those comforts. Nay, as to inherent righteousness, though you cannot attain a perfection, yet in Christ is perfection. He is All.

2. You have in him the pledge of All; according to the Apostles argumentation, *Rom. 8. 32. How shall he not with him also freely give us All things.* The Inference is strong: Had there been any one mercy that God had thought too great, too much for worthless creatures, it would certainly have been this; but since God hath not stuck at giving his Son; this instance of Gods bounty is so high, that it removes all grounds of questioning his bounty in any thing else. The Apostle from this mercy, might very well infer a certain subsequence of all other mercies, that might be profitable or beneficial: no ground of despondency therefore unto such as are interested in Christ.

Gen. 32. 10.

Use 2. What cause have we to be thankful for Christ? We have cause to be thankful for the meanest of mercies, inasmuch as we are *less than the least of all*; much more for this which is the highest of mercies: The mercies of our Creation, preservation, &c. though never so many and great, are little in comparison of this. 'Tis mentioned as an astonishing act of love, that God should *so love the world, as to give his only Son*, &c. *Joh. 3. 16.* [so] beyond all comparison [so] beyond all expression. If God hath given you his Son, 'tis more than if he had given you a whole world, because it is in him that God hath blessed you with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.

Ephes 1. 3.

John 5. 40.

Use 3. How great is their folly and misery, who keep at a distance from Christ? Our Saviour mentions it as the highest folly in the Jews, *You will not come unto me, that you might have life.* There is in Christ the life of justification, to free us from that eternal death to which the Law sentences us: The life of sanctification, to free us from that spiritual death under which our apostacy hath brought us: There is in him an All-sufficient fulness, for the repairing of all our losses: And are these mercies not worthy the coming for? The Apostle puts the very Emphasis of the Heathens misery in this, that they are *without Christ*, and therefore *without hope*: And what is their misery, shall any of us make our choice?

Ephes. 2. 12.

Ephes. 2. 12.

Use 1. Of Exhortation. Let it be your care that Christ may be All to you: 'tis no small, nor is it any common priviledge. Many there are who live *without Christ*: Others to whom All that is in Christ is so far from being to their salvation, that it only aggravates their

their destruction. He that is to some *the chief corner stone*, is to others *1 Pet. 2.6, 8.* no better than a *stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.* This was prophesied of Christ; This child shall be *for the fall and rising again of many in Israel.* There's no mercy so eminently good, but through our *Luk. 3. 34.* corruptions it may become an occasion of evil. Christ himself, the greatest of mercies that ever God vouchsafed to creatures, is yet so far from saving some from their sins, that he only encreases their sin. *If I had not come and spoke unto them, they had not had sin, but now they* *John 16. 22.* *have no cloak for their sin.* Those who enjoyed the Ministry of Christ in his own person, and were not wrought upon thereby, all their sins would comparatively have been a kind of innocence, had they not discovered such an height of obstinacy: 'tis therefore no common privilege. But what should we do that it may be ours? Take these few Directions.

1. Labour to get your judgments settled in the belief of this great truth: That all things in the world are a very nothing without Christ: That you are poor in the midst of worldly riches, and miserable in the midst of all earthly happiness, while you remain in your estrangements from Christ: And that of all kind of poverty and misery this is the worst, because it is in those spiritual blessings wherein consists both our present and future happiness. 'Tis but little those persons understand of their great concernments, that can with that Gospel fool, think themselves sufficiently provided for in the things of this world, and say to their souls as he to his, *Soul,* *Luk. 12. 19.* *thou hast goods laid up for many years, eat, drink, and be merry.* Dost thou know thou livest in this world upon the very brink of eternity? And dost thou know whether there be more than *one step* between thee and another world? And canst thou take up with any thing on this side Christ? it is an Argument you know but little of your own concernments. Some of the grosser *Platonists* thought the world to be a great *Animal*, and the soul which acted it was God; now if the soul be departed from the body, what is it but a meer carcase without life. Christ is the very life and soul of all our comforts, and without him all our creature-enjoyments are but as so many cyphers without a figure, which have no significance in them, but are so many nothings. Nothing in respect of true comfort here; nothing in respect of your preparations for another world. Labour therefore through the glass both of Scripture and experience, to behold all the excellencies of this world, as so many bladders filled with wind, and at best, to be like *Hagars*

Gen. 21. 14. Bottle, which was soon empty, or as Broken Cisterns, Cisterns, and therefore cannot hold much, broken Cisterns, and therefore cannot hold what they have long. And withall, let it be your wisdom to look upon Christ, as that everlasting Fountain of all good, which can never be drawn dry, as that never failing Spring of all those blessings which will not only sweeten every condition here, but go with us beyond death and the grave. Such fixed apprehensions of these things will be singularly useful to engage our souls in an earnest pursuit after Christ, or in the Psalmists words, *to follow hard after him*, and 'tis his promise, that they that come to him, *he will in no wise cast out*, John 6. 37.

2 Sam. 5. 4. 2. Be speedy in casting out those inmates, which because they are unmeet companions for Christ, may hinder his taking possession of your souls. The Ark and Dagon could not stand together in the same room, but if the Ark stands, Dagon falls. Can two walk together except they be agreed? Christ and our corruptions are at no agreement, these two cannot dwell together under the same roof. If you would have Christ to take up his abode in your hearts, you must prepare a place for him; It was said of David, he would neither give sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eye-lids, till he had found out an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. The souls of most men are so crowded with other guests, that the best entertainment they can afford Christ, is but such as he found in his first entrance into the world, an out-room; a stable, a manger; But let it be your care to renounce communion with all things that might hinder your communion with him, *to forget thy own people, and thy Father's house, so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty*; so, nor other wayes, he will have no rivals, no competitors, not a part of our heart, but all.

Psal. 45. 10, 11. 3. Be willing to accept of Christ upon his own terms, there can be no terms hard on which we may gain an interest in him. The great and main condition is self-denial, together with a full resignation of our selves to him, and Self-denial, if duly considered, is the greatest Self-advantage. 1. Because he calls us not to deny our selves in any thing that is truly for our spiritual good, or at least so far as 'tis for our good. 2. Though he calls us to deny our selves in many outward good things, yet 'tis not so much to part with them, as to exchange them for what is better. 3. The main objects of Self-denial are those things which 'tis our priviledge to be freed from; no reason therefore to be offended at such terms as these, to resign

up

up our mistaken judgments to the guidance of infinite Wisdom, our corrupt wills, to his most holy and gracious will, to be in all things at the command of him, whose commands are in nothing *grivous*, but in all things *truth* and *righteousness*. Be therefore as willing to be his, as you are desirous he should be yours; the consent must be mutual, or else the match can never be made up 'twixt Christ and your souls.

4. Measure all things by their reference unto Christ, of all good things account them the best which may promote your endeavours after that good which is the highest; as Ordinances, the means of Grace, which at how high a rate they are valued by David, may appear from his pathological, and most affectionate desires of waiting upon God in them; of all evil things account them the worst which estrange you from Christ the truest good, and therefore let your only impatience be of sin, as that which only separates between you and your God. The observation of this rule will very much secure you from all diversions, and quicken you in your endeavours after an interest in Christ.

2. Use. Be serious in resolving this great Question, whether Christ who is All to sincere Christians, be All to you; 'tis a question of that importance, that all your comfort depends upon the resolution of it, yea all your hopes. Take these two Characters.

1. Are you conformable unto Christ? Is the same mind in you that was in him? Are you holy and humble, and Self-denying, and in all things followers of that pattern which he hath set before you in his own example? He that is joyned to the Lord, is one spirit, 1 Cor. 6. 17. Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Causes are best known by their effects, Trees by their fruits, Fountains by their streams; So is our interest in Christ by this effect thereof, our conformity unto Christ.

2. Are you All to him: 'Tis but a just retaliation in Christians to be so, and 'tis withall an evidence that Christ is All to them.

1. Are you All to him in your affections, in prizing him above All, can you with the Spouse esteem the love of Christ better than wine, with David, better than life; can you in the midst of all your creature comforts, account all as nothing in comparison of him? and say with Asaph, Whom have I in heaven but God? and there is none on earth I desire in comparison of him. So high were Moses affections, that he esteems the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. And indeed, if Christ be but an underling in our affections,

'tis

'tis an argument we have no part in him, *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me; he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.* The affections are the truest pulse of the soul, the most genuine and natural symptoms of its frame and temper. 'Tis these that speak the proper idiom and language of the heart. Make use of this rule therefore; Is Christ uppermost in thy heart, thy affection to him, is an evidence of his to thee.

2. Are you All to him in your *acknowledgments*, in ascribing All to him. Thus St. Paul, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *By the grace of God I am what I am.* That my condition is not better, it is from my self, that 'tis so good, 'tis from him. So Eph. 5. 20.

3. Are you All to him in your *contentment* and satisfaction, accounting you have All in him, though you have nothing besides him. Hab. 3. 17, 18. *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither fruits be in the Vine, the labour of the Olive shall fail, &c. yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

4. Are you all to him in your *dependances* and expectations in seeking All from him, the highest condition of grace, needs further grace, but in Christ are all supplies; 'tis an argument of our interest in him, when in all distresses we make him our refuge, in all weaknesses our strength.

5. Are you All to him in your designs and aims, in seeking his glory, beyond your private advantages; this was St. Paul's design in life and death that *Christ might be magnified*, Philip. 1. 20. and if you be thus All to Christ, 'tis an evidence Christ is All to you. And how well are they provided for, who have him who is All, for their Portion?

How



How shall those Merchants keep up the life of Religion, who, while at home, enjoyed all Gospel Ordinances, and when abroad, are not only destitute of them, but exposed to persecution.

Psal. 120. 5.

Wo is me, that I sojourn in Mesch; that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.



His Psalm is the first of those fifteen which are called *Songs of Degrees*, concerning which, the conjectures of Interpreters are various and uncertain; either because they were sung by the Jews at their several stages, in their return from the *Babylonish* captivity; or by the Levites: on the fifteen steps, or stairs, whereby they went up to the house of the Lord; or because they raised up their voices to

an high strain in singing them; or because they are Psalms of greatest use and excellency.

The Psalm is generally thought to be composed upon occasion of *David's* flying from *Saul*, and *Doeg's* false accusation of him; and it *Sam. xx. 23* consists of three general parts;

1. *David's* carriage towards God in the time of his distress, *vers. 1. 2.* *In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me: Deliver my soul, &c.*

2. *David's*

2. *David's* denouncing of judgment against his slanderous false-tongued enemy, *verf. 5. 4. Who shall be given?* intimating that he expected some great reward for his malice against *David*; but faith the Psalmist, he shall have sharp arrows of the Almighty, with coals of juniper, q. d. whatever reward he have from men, this shall be his reward from God.

3. *David's* bewailing his present condition, *v. 5. 6. 7.* The words of the Texture are a branch of the third general part of the Psalm; wherein we have *David* sadly breathing forth the sorrow of his heart for his absence from the Tabernacle and the company of good men, and his dwelling among, & converse with evil and wicked men, *Who is me, &c.*

By *sojourning* I suppose is implied his absence from some desired habitation, viz. *Jerusalem*, and the Tabernacle, for no man is said to sojourn at home, and when he is where he would be.

Psal. 39. 12.
105. 23.

Heb. 11. 9.

משך

est trahere,

Isa. 13. 22.

ימיה

לא ימשכי

dies ejus non

trahentur, i.e.

non proroga-

buntur. Bo-

charti. Geog.

Sacr. par. 1. l. 3.

c. 12. p. 209.

Bochart. ut sup.

The word *Mesech* is taken by Expositors, either 1. For a place, as our translation carries it from the Chaldee paraphrase, which is the first of the ancient versions that so understand it: or 2. For an expression of the prolonging of his sojourning; for so the word משך signifies to draw forth or to prolong; and thus the Septuagint renders this place, *ἡ μακρολογία τοῦ ἐξομολογῆσαι*; whom the Arabick, Syriack, and vulgar Latine versions follow, with some others: and the next verse seems to favour this sense, *v. 6. My soul hath long dwelt, &c.* but either way gives us the same ground of complaint, only the first sense doubles the ground of the Psalmist's trouble, and the other suggests the circumstance of the long continuance of his sojourning.

By *Kedar* is understood part of *Arabia*, the inhabitants whereof are called *Bedouins*, or dwellers in tents, because they had no fixed and settled habitation, but were robbers and lived upon the prey.

Now we are not to suppose that *David* did really sojourn and dwell among these barbarous people; but he speaks thus of his wandering about from place to place without any settled habitation; and to set forth the cruelty and inhumanity of those among whom he dwelt, he doth express it thus, *Who is me that I dwell, &c.* as if one living among professed Christians, who deal with him more like savages than Christians, should say, *Who is me, that I sojourn among Turks and Saracens.* And thus you see *David's* present condition which he bewails, is his absence from *Jerusalem* and the Tabernacle, or place of God's solemn worship, and his converse with wicked and ungodly men: and then these two truths lie plain before us in the words,

It is oftentimes the lot and portion of good men to be deprived of the society of the godly, and of opportunities of Publick serving God, and to dwell among, and converse with wicked and ungodly persons. Doct. 1.

It is a real ground of trouble and sorrow to a good man to be thus deprived, &c. 'Twas that which here made David proclaim himself in a state of woe and misery; 'twas that which the Apostle tells us did vex the righteous soul of Lot, 2 Pet. 1. 7. and which made the holy Prophet Elijah even weary of his life, 1 King. 19. 4. You may easily imagine what a sad heart a poor Lamb might well have, if it be driven from the green pastures, and still waters, and forced to lodge among Wolves and Foxes, where it must feed upon Carrion or starve, and be continually in danger of being lodged in the bellies of its cruel and bloody companions, unless some secret over-ruling hand do restrain their rage, and feed it with wholesome food; and truly such is the condition of those that follow the Lamb of God in holy Lamb-like qualities, when deprived of green pastures, and still waters of Gospel-Ordinances, and forc'd to converse with wicked and ungodly men.

In handling of this Point I shall first lay before you the grounds of it, and then adjoyn such practical application, as may be usefull and profitable.

The grounds of this Truth doe partly refer to God, partly to wicked men, and partly to the godly themselves; if in such a condition a believing soul either look upwards, or outwards, or inwards, he will see much cause of grief and trouble.

1. With reference unto God, and that upon a double account:

1. It is a real ground of sorrow to a believing soul to be deprived of occasions of solemn blessing and praising God; the Soul that is full of the sense of the goodness of God, that knows how many thousand wayes the Lord is continually obliging it to love and bless him, cannot but be afflicted in spirit, to be kept from making its Publick acknowledgements of divine goodness. The Psalmist tells us, *Psal. 65. 1. That praise waiteth for God in Sion*, that is, in the Publick Assemblies of the Church; and truly 'tis a grief to a believing Soul, not to wait there with his thank-offerings, not to pay his vows unto the Lord in the presence of all his people, in the Courts of the Lords *Psal. 116. 17. house, &c.* not to declare to all that fear God what he hath done for *Psal. 66. 18. thier Souls.*

• 2. It is a real ground of sorrow to live among those that are continually reproaching and blaspheming the Name of God: to see

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sinners

sinners despise the goodness of God, and trample upon his grace and mercy, and scorn his love and kindness, and kick at his howels, and spit in his face, and stab at his heart, who is our God, our Father, our Friend, our good and gracious Lord and King: This must needs make the believing Soul cry out, Woe is me that I live among such.

Let us suppose a person that hath been hugely obliged by a Prince to love him, and that indeed loves him as his life, if this Prince should be driven from his Throne, and an usurper get into his place, would it not be a great affliction, and sadning to the spirit of such a person to live among those who every day revile, reproach, scorn and abuse his gracious Prince? Why, Sirs, if you and I be true believers, we know that the Lord is our Sovereign King and Prince, such a one who hath infinitely more obliged us to love him, than 'tis possible for any Prince to oblige a Subject; and we doe love the Lord as our lives, nay better than our lives, or else we love him not at all; and must it not then be matter of grief, to hear ungodly sinners, who have driven God away from their hearts and souls, where his Throne should be set up, and who have let that grand usurper the Devil set up his throne within them, and among them, and who daily say unto God as those wicked ones, *Job 21. 14. Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes*, to hear such curse and swear and blaspheme God, and in their lives by wicked ungodly courses do him all the despight and dishonour that they can, bring his Name to the Tavern, to the Stews, upon the stage, and there foot and defile the great and glorious Name of God with the worst of polutions; Certainly Sirs, he cannot account God his Friend; his Father, his good and gracious Prince, whose eye doth not run down with Rivers of tears to see men so far from keeping Gods Law.

2. It is a trouble to good men to sojourn, &c. with reference to those wicked ungodly persons among whom they live, it grieves their souls to see sinners *run into all excess of riot*, eagerly pursuing Hell and Damnation, greedily guzzling down full draughts of the venom of Asps, and the poyson of Dragons; it pitties them to see sinners stab themselves to the heart, and laughing at their own plague sores, jeasting away God and heaven, and eternal happiness. If any of us should see a company of men so far besotted and distracted, as that one should rend and burn the Evidences of a great Inheritance which others labour to deprive him of, another should cast inestimable Pearls and Jewels into the Sea, another eagerly drinking

drinking down that which you knew to be the juice of Toads and Spiders, or hugging a Viper, and Scorpion in his bosome, another stabbing himself in the breast, another laughing at, and licking his own plague sores, and all of them reviling, cursing, striking, spitting in the face, and stabbing at the heart of those that any wayes endeavour to hinder them from destroying themselves, or that will not doe as they doe, and be as mad as themselves, should we not pittie them, and with grief of heart say, *Wo is me that I live among such ?*

Why Sirs, he that hath had any serious thoughts of Eternity, that hath soberly considered the worth of an immortal soul, that believes the Holiness, Justice, and Power of God, that understands the evill of sin, what a plague, what a Venome, what a dagger at the sinners own heart, sin is, he cannot but see and know that every ungodly prophane sinner is much more an object of highest compassion than any I have now mentioned, and therefore cannot but cry out, *Wo is me, &c.*

3. It is a trouble to good men to sojourn, &c. with reference to themselves, and their own concernments, because they are sensible that such a condition layes them open to a great deal of danger; and that

1. In regard of their graces; for the want of the Society of good men, and the Ordinances of the Gospel, is like the want of dew and Rain to the Grass, or Food to the Body; and therefore those who have tasted of *the sweetness and fatness*, and know what a blessedness 'tis to be *satisfied with the goodness* of Gods house, cannot but mourn over the want of Gospel-Ordinances; as the presence of the Sun beams make the flowers to be fresh and beautifull, and yield a fragrant smell; whereas the want thereof makes them look pale and wan, and hang the head; even so the enjoyment of good Society and Gospel-Ordinances, makes the Graces of a Believer amiable and lovely, and give forth their pleasant smell, the want of which makes them very much to droop and languish.

psal. 36. 8.
65. 4.

And then on the other side, the Society of wicked men, the venome and poyson of an evill example, the alluring flatteries of the world on one hand, and its frowns and threatnings on the other hand, are of great force to nip and blast, to dead and dull the graces of good men.

And therefore he who knows the worth and value of true Grace, that accounts it his Riches, his Treasure, his Jewel, his Life, and is sensible how much depends upon the life and vigour of Grace and

Luke 12. 20.

Religion in his Soul, and understands how destructive the want of Gospel Ordinances, and the company of evil men are to his Graces; may, well cry out, *Wo is me that I sojourn, &c.*

1 Joh 3. 12.

Rev. 17. 6.

2. In regard of their persons, and the concernments of this life; the enmity that is in the seed of the Serpent, against the seed of the Woman, doth not onely put forth it self in endeavours to ruine or weaken their graces, but also to destroy their persons: wicked mens malice against that spiritual life of grace in good men, which themselves do not partake of, doth soon improve into malice also against that natural humane life which themselves are also partakers of; their desires to suck the blood, as I may so say, of good mens souls and graces, makes them delight to suck the blood of their bodies; witness *Cain*, the first that learnt this bloody trade, by killing his brother for no other cause, but *because his own works were evil; and his brothers righteous*; witness also *Ahab* and *Jezebel*, *Manasseh*, &c. but the foul-mouthed witness to this black and sad truth, is the scarlet bloody Whore of *Babylon*, who is *drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus*, and therefore in Gods due time she shall have *blood to drink*; those therefore who understand what an hellish fire of rage is in the hearts of wicked men, how great their malice is against goodness and good men, and what combustible matter our life, and the comforts of this life be, so far as they value these mercies, have reason with *David* to cry out, *Wo is me that I sojourn in Mesech, &c.*

And now the wofull condition of those that are deprived of Gospel Ordinances, and sojourn where heavenly Manna doth not fall, and who dwell among, and converse with wicked and ungodly men, as it calls upon us to bless God when it is not so with us, and to pity and pray for those who have reason to take up such a complaint, as *David* here doth; so also to bethink our selves what we ought to do if the case were ours; for you know the life of a Christian is very oft, and very fitly in Scripture compared to a warfare; and surely he is but a mean souldier, and never like to come off with victory and triumph, who doth not prepare himself for all kinde of assaults, and doth not labour to fortifie every passage, whereat he may be stormed; and therefore 'tis good for us to make the condition of others our own; so that this question, or practicall case of conscience will offer it self to our consideration.

Quest,

How shall those Merchants and others keep up the life of Religion, who while they were at home, enjoyed all Gospel Ordinances,

nances, but being abroad, are not onely deprived of them, but liable to the Inquisition; and other wayes of persecution for their Religion?

Before I answer the Case I shall a little open it, and lay down some preparatory propositions for the right understanding of it, and then direct our practise.

By Religion we doe not understand any outward way or form, any pomp and gayeties in worshipping God; but such a due sence of our dependance upon a good and gracious, Almighty, Holy God, for our being, and well-being, both in Time and to Eternity, as doth powerfully engage the soul heartily to love God, and sincerely to serve him, in obeying his good and holy commands made known to us.

By the life of Religion we may understand, either 1. The truth and reality of it in the soul, in opposition to a soul dead in sin; or 2. The vigour, activity and liveliness of Religion, in opposition to a dead, dull languid principle; and both may be well included in the Question, for as we are all concerned to endeavour, by all fit and lawfull means, not only to have our bodies kept from rotting and putrifying by the *salt of a living soul*, but to have them active and vigorous, fit for the employments of a naturall life, and not stupified with Lethargies and benumbing Palsies; even so we ought to endeavour, not only that our Souls may be quickned with a true principle of Religion, but that we may have such a lively, vigorous and influencing sence of divine goodness upon them, that our Religion may not be a dull, languid, lethargick principle; but may render us fit and prompt for all the actions of a spirituall life. And now, this life of Religion, the case supposeth the person to have, who needs advice; and then you'l quickly perceive that there be two things in danger.

1. The life of Religion in a Religious person.
2. The life of a Religious person; and so the Case doth resolve it self into these two Queries,

1. What should believing Christians doe to support the life and vigour of Religion in their Souls, when they want the ordinary means of Publick Ordinances, and are endangered by the leavening society of wicked men?

2. How should they preserve their lives among persecuting enemies without hazzarding the life of their Religion?

For the clearing of and directing in this case I shall now premise some Propositions fit to be taken notice of,

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Prop. 1. It cannot be expected, that any Rule should be given, according to Scripture, whereby both the one, and the other life may be certainly secured; for many times Gods providence brings us into such circumstances, that if we are resolved, that come what will, we will keep our Religion, we must lose our lives: and if we are resolved to keep our lives, though with the hazard, or shipwrack of our Religion, we must then part with our Religion, and perhaps our lives too.

2. There can be no certain and infallible course propounded whereby the life of the body may be secured with the loss of Religion; though Devil and world bid fair, and promise we shall live and doe well if we will part with our Religion; yet they are not able, if willing to make good their promise, so long as there be so many thousand wayes to death besides Martyrdome; and this is the purport of that threatening expreffion, *Matth. 16. 25. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it*, not only that eternall life which is the only true life, but even this temporall life; as many relations tell us:

3. The life of Religion in the soul, is that which by Gods blessing and our spirituall care and industry may be infallibly secured in any place, among any persons, in any condition; I do not say the outward exercise of Religion, but that which is the life and principle of Religion in the soul may be preserved. Force and violence may deprive those that are Religious, of opportunities to meet together, and pour forth their *Common prayers* and supplications to God, and publicly sing forth the praises of God, and hear the great Truths of the Gospell preached unto them; nay they may be hindered from speaking with their mouthes, either to God, or for God; as many of the Martyrs have been gagged: but all the force and violence in the world, cannot take away that which is the principle and life of Religion (unless we our selves betray and cast it from us) nor can they hinder the prime, and principall acts and exercises of Religion. All the world cannot hinder you or me, from having good thoughts of God, from sanctifying the Lord God in our hearts, from trusting in, hoping in, rejoycing in, the goodness and mercy of God through Jesus Christ; from making holy melody in our hearts, and such musick as shall be heard beyond the spears, though he that stands at our elbow knows not a word we speak; so that true Religion both in the principle and prime exercises of it may be infallibly secured, insomuch that he who can rend the heart out of the Body, cannot tear Religion out of the Soul.

4. His Soul cannot be quickned with life of the Religion of the Gospell, who is not in heart perswaded, that the securing the life of Religion in his Soul, is hugely more his concernment, than the preserving the life of the body: Yea his Religion is built on a Sandy foundation, who hath not seriously considered, that for ought he knows, his Religion may cost him his life, and hath not brought his soul to an humble resolution to lay down his life, rather than let goe his Religion: thus much is clearly imported in that passage, *Luk. 14. 27, 28, &c. Which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, &c.*

5. The Society of good men, and enjoyment of Gospell Ordinances, is of speciall use to preserve, quicken and enliven the principle of Religion in the Soul; they are to Religion in the Soul, what Food is to the naturall life of the Body: and therefore the Ordinances in the Church, are compared to *breasts of Consolation, Isa. 66. 11.* The great design of God in appointing Gospell Ordinances is, that by the help and assistance of those Gifts and Graces which he bestows upon his Ministers, the Souls of those who are estranged from him, should be brought home to the owning and acknowledging of the truth; and that those who have returned to the Lord, should be more and more affected with a sense of Divine Goodness, and their dependence on the Lord, for all they have and hope for; and indeed if Preaching and Reading, and Praying, and every other Ordinance, both in Publick and in Private, doe not aim at and intend this great end, the begetting or actuating and stirring up the life of Religion in our Souls, then are they what some would faine perswade us, vain, useles, troublesome things. If thy coming to Church to hear a Prayer, or a Sermon, be not by thee designed, and doe not in the event tend to make thee better, to love God more, loath sin more, and value the world less, and resolve more heartily to obey the Gospell, thou hadst as good have been in thy bed or shop as in the Church; and if in Preaching and Praying, we that are Gods mouth to you, and your mouth to God, have any other design than to stir up in your Souls good thoughts of God, affectionate workings of heart towards a loving tender-hearted Father, zealous and hungry desires, to doe the will of God, and express our love by obeying his Commandments, I seriously profess I should think my self much better employed to be working in a Coblers stall, or raking in the kennel, or filling a dung cart, than preaching or praying in a pulpit; and let those who doe not intend these great ends, know that ere long they

they will finde, they had better have been employed in the most debasing drudgery, than in the outward work of God with sinister and unworthy ends,

These things premised, the case resolves it self into these particular questions,

1. What should believing Christians doe to support the life of Religion in their souls, when they want the ordinary food of publick Gospel-Ordinances?

2. What should such doe to preserve their outward concernsments among persecuting enemies without hazarding their Religion?

In answer to the first question take these Directions:

1. Let such humbly reflect upon their former sleighting, despising and abusing the means of grace which now they want; it is the usuall method of God, to teach us the worth of Mercies either Temporal or Spiritual by the want of them, and to bring us, to want those mercies which we abuse; if the Childe play with, or throw about his meat, he may well think a wise and loving Father will make him feell the want of it, and thereby know the worth of it; and certainly we have as much reason to fear the fulfilling of those threatnings which the Ministers of the Gospel have for many years founded in our ears, for our abuse of the means of grace; and certainly if Gods providence should call the most of us into *Spain*, or some other Popish Country where we should have a *famine of hearing the word of the Lord*, might we not sadly reflect upon our despising, yea and loathing the heavenly Manna of Gods Word? I speak not of the prophane ungodly wretches, who scarce ever had any serious thoughts of Eternity, nor ever soberly considered whether they were at all beholding unto God or no, that never knew how to value a Bible above a Play-book, or the Sacrament above a drunken meeting, whose Religion is to scoffe and mock at godliness and godly men, and who scarce ever knew any other end in coming to Church, but to mock or carp at the Preacher, who may with trembling read their doom, 2 Chron. 36. 16. But I speak of the Professors of Religion, how have they either by reason of new fangled opinions, sleighted and despised Gospel-Ordinances? or else by reason of fulness of spiritual food, have loathed and trampled upon the means of grace, to whom the Lord seems to speak, as to those, Ezek. 34. 18.

19. *Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture but you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with*

your

your feet? And as for my flock they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet; or else having enjoyed them, and made use of them, have been little the better by them? have not lived and practised the Sermons they have heard, and the prayers they have made? Oh let such be sure in the first place to give glory to God, when he deprives them of such means, by acknowledging his justice in taking away what hath been so much abused, or at best so little improved; then let them with broken and bleeding hearts reflect upon those full Banquets of spiritual dainties, the fragments of which in a time of want they would be glad of.

2. Heartily resolve, if ever the Lord bring you again to enjoy Gospel-Ordinances, you will more value, prize, and improve them; and indeed that alone which can make our repentings and sad reflections upon former miscarriages not to be mockings of God, and censuring our selves, must be an hearty resolution against what we profess to be sorry for; and therefore that our resolution in such a case may be the more fixed, it would be good to record it in our Note-books, that so it may be a continual Monitor on all occasions minding us of our duty, and checking us, if afterwards we prove like the *Israelites, who soon forgat the Lord.* And the truth is a Christians Note-book is usually a more faithfull register than his heart, and 'tis easier for the Devil to blot a good resolution out of our mindes, than out of our books. Psal. 106. 13.

3. Labour to know and understand well, and often remember, wherein consists the life of true and real Religion; there be so many things in the world that pretend to be Religion, and less deserve that name, than the picture of a man deserves the name of a man, that 'tis an easie mistake, to nourish an enemy to Religion instead of Religion, unless we be serious and wary; and more apt to regard the characters which the Scriptures give, of real Religion, than hasty to take up the forms and fancies of men instead of Religion. I have read of a young *French Lady*, who observing the glorious pomp and splendour of a Popish Procession, cryed out, *How fine a Religion is ours in comparison of the Hugonots?* a speech suiting her age and quality; but indeed if Religion did consist in such things, the question I have in hand would fall to the ground, for there could then be no exercise of Religion among those who would not admit of such pompous solemnities. Let us therefore be often remembring, that the Religion of the Gospel consists in

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Rom. 14. 17. righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost; in denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in
 Tit. 2. 12. 13. this present world, and so looking for that blessed hope and the glorious
 Jam. 1. 27. appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; in visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keeping our selves unspotted from the world.

He that hath a precious Jewell which he would secure, must be able to distinguish it well from a counterfeit stone; lest he neglect his Jewell and spend his care and pains upon a glittering glass foisted into the room of it.

4. In all your actions be often fixing your eye upon your great end; be often asking your selves what is the work and business for which God sent me into the world? which lyes in three words: 1. Honour God. 2. Save your Souls. 3. Do good to others, Be often minding yours. selves that you have a better Trade to drive than for the corruptible riches of this world, even for the *pearl of great price*, the eternall happiness of your souls. Religion is the way to Heaven, and he that doth not often eye his journey's end; and consider, whether the way he takes, do lead unto his end, is never like to keep long in the right way; but now he that often with seriousness considers with himself that the God who made him, expects to be honoured by him; that the securing his souls welfare is his grand concernment; and that to save the soul of one sinner is a greater good than to save a Countrey from drowning, or a City from burning; and therefore on all occasions asks himself, how may I mannage such a business so as to honour God and promote the good of mine own and other mens souls? How may I prosecute such an affair without prejudicing the grand design of my life? This man is like to secure Religion in his soul.

5. Live up to the professed principles of your Religion; and believe it to be a greater glory to God, honour to your Religion, and security to your own souls to live according to, than to argue and dispute for your Religion; for most certain it is that self-love, worldly interest, pride, passion, &c. May urge men to argue eagerly for the Christian or Protestant Religion, whereas nothing but love to God, and care of our own souls, and charity to the souls of others, can make a man live according to the Principles of that Religion; and as it is with the principle of naturall life, it is not made more lively, active and vigorous by arguing and disputing wherein it doth consist, and what are the proper acts of it, but by putting it forth in the due acts and exercises of that life; even so the principle

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of spirituall life in the soul, gets no strength by zealous and hot disputing, what and which is the true Religion, and which be true and proper acts of Religion, but by humble practice of what we know to be Religion; not but that it is both lawfull and commendable to be able to understand and defend the grounds and principles of our Religion, and all the holy exercises of it, but I only caution against letting that sap run out in unfruitfull suckers, which should nourish the fruit-bearing branches:

6. Be the more carefull to observe and close with the inward stirrings of Gods Spirit in your hearts, moving you to prayer, meditation, &c. When you are in a *valley of vision*, you will have many calls and motions from without to hear the Word, and pray, and receive the Sacrament, but when you are abroad in a land of darkness, God must not onely be your *best*, but your *only* friend, by his Spirit to jog and stir you up to holy duties; and therefore it doth more than ordinarily concern us, at such a time, not to send away Gods Spirit grieved with our backwardness to that which is our own concernment.

7. Observe and keep a register or diary of Gods mercies and your own sins; that you may be often minded what God hath been to you, and what you have been to him; with how many thousand kindnesses he hath obliged you, and with how many thousand sins you have disobliged him; When we enjoy publick Ordinances we may there be often minded both of Gods goodness to us and our sinfulness against him; and so may have our hearts stirred up to have very good thoughts of God, and very low thoughts of our selves: but when we want publick Ordinances we should labour to supply that want, by a more strict observation and recording, both the one and the other; that by reviewing our register we may be enabled to affect our souls suitably, either to praise the Lord, or abase our selves:

8. Lay a charge upon your selves to sleep and awake with the thoughts of God, and eternity upon your souls; and indeed though this is exceeding usefull for all men, yet most of all for those who are deprived of Ordinances. 'Tis sure that the same truths which at first work upon the soul to the begetting grace, are of force afterwards to quicken grace, and make it lively and vigorous in the soul; and certainly the belief of what God is in himself and to us, and the thoughts of eternity, have a great force to perswade careless sinners to sober and serious consideration, the necessary instrument

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by which grace and a spirit of true and reall Religion is begot in the soul; and therefore when we want those publick Ordinances which might be often presenting these great truths to our souls, it will be of great use to charge our selves more severely with the daily serious thoughts of them.

9. Take heed (as for your life) of indulging any secret sin; for that will keep down the life of Religion in the midst of all Ordinances, and therefore much more in the want of them; a secret disease in the body which spends upon the stock of the radicall moysture, will keep a man from being lively and vigorous, though he have plenty of very good nourishing food, much more will it endanger one in a famine; even so a secret sin lodged within, and indulged, will weaken and enervate the principle of Religion in the soul amidst the fullest provision of Gospel Ordinances, much more when there is a famine or scarcity of the bread of life. A Tradesman that hath some secret vent, where his estate runs wast, may prove a beggar in the midst of daily incomes by a good Trade, much more if he spends upon a dead stock; and so a man who spends the strength of his soul in some close and secret sin, may prove a spirituall beggar in the fullest Trade of Gospel Ordinances, and though he have daily incomes of convictions, informations, reproofs, counsels, sollicitations, &c. from publick Ordinances, much more in the want of them; and therefore they who value the life of Religion, or the life of their souls, must take heed of indulging secret sins.

10. Be the more carefull often to feel the pulse of thine own soul; we use to say, every man at a competent age is either a fool or a Physician, and though he be a fool indeed, who when he needs and may have wiser Physicians will trust to himself, yet when he cannot have others, a man should the more study himself, and the oftener try his own pulse; and truly he is but a babe in spiritual things that is not something of a Physician to himself; and though we should not trust our own skill or experience, where we need and may have the help of others, yet when we are deprived of them, we should the more diligently converse with our own souls, and be the oftner trying how our pulse beats towards God, and Heaven, and the things of another life.

11. Be so much the more in private secret prayer, reading, and meditation; when we want the shows of publick Ordinances, we should the more diligently use the watering pot, and water our souls

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with our foot (as the phrase is concerning *Agypt*) Deut. 11. 10. If our lot should be cast where there be no publick Markets, where Corn might be bought, every one would plow and sow, reap and thrash in his own grounds: Even so, if we should live where there be no publick Gospel-Ordinances, where the Truths of the Gospel are not publickly to be had, where we cannot partake of the labours of the Gospel-Ministry, then it would concern us to be the more diligent in plowing, and sowing, in reaping and thrashing by our own private endeavours; and I think it would be fit for us in such a condition, to spend that time at least in private duties, which others spend in superstitious or idolatrous services; let not us think much to give God and our souls that time, which others give to their own superstitious fancies.

12. In the use of all private helps, act faith in God, as being able to supply the want of outward means by the gracious influence of his good and holy Spirit. When there was no rain from heaven, God could cause a mist to arise and water the earth, *Gen. 2. 6.* even so if the Lord should bring us where there be no showres of publick Ordinances, he can stir up in our souls those holy and heavenly meditations, which shall again drop down like an heavenly dew upon the face of our souls, and keep up an holy verdure and freshness upon the face of our souls. *Agypt* is said to have no rain, but God makes it fruitful by the overflowing of its own River *Nilus*; and truly if God *Terra non indiga Jovis.* bring any true believer into a spiritual *Agypt*, where the rain of publick Ordinances doth not fall, he can cause such a flow of holy and heavenly thoughts and meditations as shall make the soul very fruitful in a good and an holy life; and therefore we should oft in such a condition believingly remember, that if we do our endeavour, by private prayer, meditation, reading, and such like, God is able and will, in the want of publick Ordinances, preserve the life of Religion in our souls, by private helps.

We proceed now to the second Question contained in the general case, viz.

Quest. What should believing Christians do to preserve their outward concernments among persecuting enemies, without hazarding their Religion.

Now this question will resolve it self into two particular Queries.

1. What should such do to secure themselves from suffering?
2. What should they do to encourage themselves against and support ..

support in sufferings. The summe of what may be said to the first Query, I suppose to be comprized in that counsel of our Lord Jesus, who was Wisdom it self, and Innocency it self, *Matth. 10. 16. Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of Wolves, be ye therefore wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves*; the Serpents wisdom joyned with the Doves innocency are the true Christians best security; to each of which I shall speak something.

I. Get spiritual Prudence and Wisdom to secure from suffering where we have not a clear and sufficient call. The Heathens hinted wisdom as well as strength to be needfull for a Souldier, when they appointed the Warlike Goddess *Pallas* to be the Patroness of Wisdom; a Souldier may and ought to guard himself, and by winding and turning his body avoid the enemies blow, so long as he doth not turn his back, forsake the field, or betray his trust; in like manner may a good Souldier of Jesus Christ, by any lawfull means guard himself from suffering; and by any just compliance, or stepping aside, or giving back, avoid a blow or make a fair retreat, so long as he keeps the Field, and doth not turn his back upon, nor give up a good, and a just cause for fear of suffering. Hence the Apostle adviseth, *Col. 4. 5. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without*; that is, walk as those that have wisely fixt upon a good end, and do use the most proper and likely means to attain that end. Now this general direction will branch it self forth into these particulars:

I. Do not rashly and unnecessarily provoke those that have power to do you a mischief; it is not wisdom to stir in a wasps nest, nor by bloody colours to provoke a wilde Bill; and certainly our life, and the comforts and relations in this world, are such real and great blessings, that they are not to be sacrificed to an humour, nor cast away, but upon the most serious consideration, and real necessity; and certainly when our Lord Jesus directed his Disciples, if persecuted in one City, to flee to another, he never intended they should throw themselves into the jaws of roaring Lions, nor provoke Bears and Tygers to tear them in pieces, nor leave the quiet habitation of *Sion* to seek persecution, and court a Martyrdom among Pagans and infidels. The holy Apostle *Paul*, who was as willing to die for the Name of Christ as any, and was therefore by his love and zeal urged to go into the Theater at *Ephesus*, yet he took the Prudent counsel and advice of his Friends, not to ventur

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19. 31. and afterward he made use of his Kinsmans help to secure his life from those who had bound themselves with an oath to kill him, *Act. 23. 12.* and at last appeals to *Cesar* to avoid the mischief designed against him by the *Jews*. *Act. 25. 10.* This piece of spiritual prudence caused the primitive Christians to abstain from prophaneing the Temples of the heathen, and reviling their gods; and therefore they chose to discover to them the vanity of their Idolatries from the Writings and Records of their own Prophets, and with the greatest love and sweetness that could be; yea this was so evident in *Paul* himself, that the Town-clerk of *Ephesus* was able to be his; and his fellow-Christian Compurgator in this matter. *Act. 19. 37.* To have brought hither these men which are neither robbers of Churches (or as the original, *isagogus sacrilegious persons*) nor yet blasphemers of your gods; and therefore that which *Josephus* accounts one of *Moses* Laws; that none should blaspheme the Religion of another; though it be not a general duty (as appears by *Elijahs* mocking and scoffing at the God and religion of *Baal*; *1 Kings 18. 27.*) yet it holds good here as a rule of prudence, to avoid needless provoking of those that are without. And in this case I take this to be a sure rule; whatever act of ours hath rationally a greater likelihood to provoke, harden and estrange the hearts of men, rather than to convince and convert; is a fruit of indiscretion, not of Christian prudence; a piece of folly, not a part of our duty. It was certainly a favour from God when he inclined the hearts of *Tiberius* and his Proconsul *Plinius Secundus*; desiring to know his pleasure in the case, that when any were brought before him; and accused to be Christians; he should punish them according to Law; but should not industriously search them out; if no witness should have runned into the Judges presence; and taken the Devils word for an ill hand (who is the accuser of the Brethren) it would surely have been a sinfull undervaluing the favours of God in that relaxation of their persecution. But now this advice must be handled with a word of caution, for as we should take heed least our zeal degenerate into ambition, and foolish vaine glory in suffering; so on the other side; least our prudence and Christian wisdom run to sinister craft and policy; while to avoid the stroke of persecution, we lay up the Devils buckler of unlawfull practices. The Apostle *Peter* was not bound to go into the high Priests hall, and proclaim himself a Disciple of *Jesus*; but he was obliged not to deny and forswear it when challenged with it; and so though I am not always bound to pro-

Plin. Sec. Ep. 1. 10. conquirendi non sunt, si de secantur & arguantur, puniendi sunt.

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claim my faith and Religion, yet am I engaged never to disown it, and therefore we must take heed of that which *Elisha* charged *Job* with, *Job*, 36, 21. the choosing *iniquity* rather than affliction; and therefore when fear or covetousness would urge us to sin, rather than suffer, let us remember, against our fears, that 'tis a more fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, than dying men, *Isa.* 51. 12. and against our earthly desires, let us remember, that if we gain the whole world, and lose our own souls, we shall be incomparable losers by the bargain, *Matth.* 16. 26. On the other side, when ambition, vain-glory or humour would urge us to unnecessary sufferings, let us remember, that God who is Wisdom it self, *hath no pleasure in fools*, *Ecc.* 3. 4. nor delights in those sacrifices which are not presented to him by prudent consideration and sober resolution, but by the folly of a precipitate zeal; and however where the heart is right and full of love, God may accept of the love, and pardon the weakness; yet he no way delights in the sufferings which men bring upon themselves unnecessarily, by rash, imprudent carriage, whereby they betray their lives and liberties to the lusts and rage of men, and draw on their enemies to blood and cruelty, and upbraid the wisdom of those who are not so rash, as being less real to God and Christ, and make others have hard thoughts of that Religion which cannot consist with prudence and wisdom.

2. Be much in the exercise of those acts of true Religion which are beautiful in the eyes of all, even the worst of men; the Apostle *Peter* intimates the security of an evidently good and holy life, *1 Pet.* 3. 13. *And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* the chief pieces of Christian Religion are such as Papists, Turks and Infidels must needs acknowledge to be good; *To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction; To wrong no man; To do to others whatever we would that others should do to us.* Now when we cannot without danger exercise some other (perhaps more questionable) parts of Christian Religion, then 'tis good to be so much the more in the practice of these undoubted pieces of a Christian life, and zeal in these things will force those without to approve, whereas zeal in arguing for, or in practising other things may cause them to hate and persecute us; zeal in arguing and disputing brings on evil words and evil actions, but zeal in the practice of unquestionable duties, produceth good deeds in our selves, and forceth goods, thoughts and good words, if not good deeds from others.

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In a word, hot disputing, and cold living, or zeal in smaller, and lukewarmness in greater matters, is the ruine of grace in our selves, the confirming of sin in others, and the needles hazarding our outward concernments and betraying them rashly to the violence of wicked and ungodly men.

3. In your converse with those who are without, chuse mostly to insist upon common, and acknowledged principles, rather than controverted points; if I were to live among, and converse with Papists, I would chuse much rather to urge them to abstain from lying, drunkenness, malice, &c. and to have good thoughts of God, to have a continual sense of their dependance upon him, and therefore continually to recommend themselves unto him by holy prayer, to be meek and patient, and charitable, rather then to dispute how many Sacraments there be, or how the bread and the wine is the body and blood of Christ; for good counsel, and sober exhortations speak love to mens souls, whereas disputes and arguings are usually thought to proceed only from love to our own notions, and a desire to oppose others; and indeed if men did not place too much of their Religion in opposing others; they might much more safely, and much more profitably converse with those of different opinions, yea of different Religions.

4. When you do touch upon controverted points, rather enquire and propound, than positively assert, and violently oppose; though I judge the Mass of *Rome*, as by them used, to be a piece of as gross Idolatry, as the world can shew, yet were I to converse among Papists I would not fall foul upon them as the grossest Idolaters; but as more desiring truth should be honoured, than they reproached, I would calmly and meekly propound my reasons as grounds of doubting, rather than clear demonstrations; for sure it is, that a sudden and violent assault, will cause an adversary to gather up his strength, as violently to oppose, whereas a calm propounding of reasons, or doubts may work him to a serious consideration, which is the first step to the discovery of error and acknowledging of truth; for the one kindles a desire of knowing, the other, a desire of opposing, yea of persecuting.

5. When you think your selves bound to reprove the sins of others, let it be done with a due consideration of the circumstances of time, place and persons; and indeed there's scarce any part of a Christians converse with others, that more requires prudence and wisdom, than that of reproofing others; and great care is to be had

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that a reproof may at the least be well taken, if not hearkened to, and that it may do the reprover no hurt, if it do the reproved no good.

6. On all occasions expresse a willingness to do for the best; to believe as others believe, and to do as others do, if you could see sufficient ground and reason for it: and indeed this may be a great help and security; for obstinacy is usually made one essentiall part of an Heretick, and then, he that is heartily willing to close with every revealed truth, may be in an error, but cannot be an Heretick; and therefore every expression of a mind not obstinately bent upon its taken up notions, nor doting upon its own conceptions, but inrich with an ingenuous freedom to acknowledge its mistakes, and own truth when once clearly discovered, though formerly disowned, is like so much water upon the fire of rage kindled in the hearts of persecuting enemies to quench or abate it; for to the reason of any that will but consider, it cannot but appear most unreasonable, to urge a person to believe what he cannot see any ground for, or to do what he would be willing to do, if it were not sin, that is, a provoking God, and hazarding his own eternal welfare.

7. Be sure to use no means to secure from persecution or procure the enjoyment of publick Ordinances, but such as are well-pleasing to a good, and a holy God; 'tis not long since it was the peculiar honour of the Popish Faction, to depose or murder Kings, blow up Parliaments, subvert States and Kingdoms, to procure their liberty, or secure themselves from suffering: and if any other have ventured upon such practices, I hope God hath taught them by his providence, what they would not learn from his word, that affliction is rather to be chosen than sin, and that 'tis better to wait upon him in the way of his Judgments (that is, in a way of duty) than to out-run God, and think to secure our selves by sinfull and unjustifiable courses. Let those therefore who profess to believe that their God is a God hearing prayer, and that bottles up the tears of his people, and is able to do what he pleaseth, let them account prayers and tears their best arms, seeing they call in that God whose power extends as far as his will.

8. Arm your selves with a severe patience and a steady resolution to bear lesser affronts and injuries; those Christians were in such a condition as we are now speaking of, whom the Apostle mindes, that they had *need of patience*, *Heb. 10. 36*. Let it be our wisdom therefore to get a stock of that which will be so needfull for us, patience

tience is alway apart of our duty, but in this case it is also an instance of our prudence; for he is a fool that will hazard the beating out of his brains, rather than bear a fflip.

9. Be much in prayer to that God who alone can secure from suffering, fit for suffering, strengthen under, and infinitely reward after we have suffered.

2. Let the Serpents wisdom be seconded with the Doves harmlessness and innocency; walk so honestly, and inoffensively that wicked men may be put hard to it, to finde an occasion to quarrel or wrong you; this was remarkable in *Daniel*, as you may see *Chap. 6. 4.* this was the Apostles direction, *1 Theff. 4. 12. Walk honestly toward those that are without*; and it was according to his practice, *Act. 24. 16. And herein do I exercise my self, to have alwayes a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.* Now this Christian innocency or simplicity ought to be like a thred to run through the whole course of our converse with others; we should neither injure the person, good name, estate, friend; or any thing which an other may call his; if the Lamb among Wolves and Foxes begin to butt, and contend no wonder if these soon bite and devour; we should be so honest and plain hearted in our Promises, Contracts, Covenants, and dealings with others, that they may reverence our Religion as teaching us to do the best things, and suffer the worst, and not hate our Religion, as being onely a design to make us the better able to deceive and injure others. Twould be no small part of our security if our carriage towards others might speak for us that which the Poet makes *Achilles* speak concerning himself, and his Tutor *Chiron*, *Jesus Christ is my Teacher, and he hath learnt me to use simplicity and honesty in all my manners.* But now if neither of these two will secure us from suffering, but Gods providence doth call us to a publick owning of him, and the Religion of the Gospel, we must then joyn the Lions courage to the wisdom of the Serpent, and the innocency of the Dove, that we may be imboldned to look the greatest danger in the face, rather than turn our back upon God and Christ, and the Religion of the Gospel. And this brings me to the second branch of the latter part of the Case, How should believers encourage themselves against sufferings?

In answer to which take these brief Directions:

1. Be often remembering how infinitely more worth the soul is than the body; be often weighing in the scales of sober and serious *Luke 16. 26.* consideration, a *precious soul* against a *vile body*; and then minde *Phil. 3. 21.*

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thy self, that the worst which persecuting enemies can do, is to destroy a corruptible body, but the worst which God can do is to destroy thine immortal soul: Christ arms his Disciples against fear of suffering by this consideration, *Marth. 10. 28. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.*

2. Think how inconsiderable time is compared with Eternity; spend your thoughts upon the difference vast and inconceivable, between those two; the Apostle tells us, *That the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. 18. The Apostle compares himself to one that hath been casting up an account, where on one side he meets with nothing but cyphers, or small petty summes; but on the other side findes thousands and millions, and then cryes out, alas, the one is not to be compared with the other! thus the Apostles findes *light and momentary afflictions*, on the one side, and *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* on the other side, as we finde him expressing himself, *2 Cor. 4. 17.*

3. Remember that the welfare of the body doth depend upon the welfare of the soul; not indeed in this world, for here his body may be well, and in good plight, fat and flourishing, well fed and clothed, whose soul is poor and naked, sick and wounded in a sad and deplorable condition; and on the other side, a poor beggarly sick *Lazarus*, may have a soul fed with Royal and heavenly Dainties; and clothed with better Robes than Purple and Ermine; but then the eternal welfare of the body depends upon the eternal welfare of the soul; 'tis bound up in the life and welfare of the soul, as *Jacobs* life is said to be bound up in *Benjamins*, Gen. 44. 30. and therefore you cannot secure the welfare of the outward man, by betraying and casting away that which is the life and welfare of the inward man.

4. Remember that you can suffer nothing in this world, but Jesus Christ hath suffered the same, or worse; The Lord Jesus arms his Disciples against sufferings by this consideration, *John 15. 20.* and the Apostle *Paul* having experienced it himself, adviseth the believing *Hebrews* to it, *Heb. 12. 1, 2, 3. Looking unto Jesus, &c.* Now this consideration will suggest to us.

1. That the worst sufferings are no dishonour to us, seeing Christ Jesus the King of Kings hath born them.

2. That the greatest sufferings do not speak us the greatest sinners :

ners; Christ sufferings assure us, that the purest and whitest innocency, may be dyed red in its own blood.

3. That the greatest sufferings make us never the less amiable in the eyes of God, for then Christ Jesus the onely begotten Son of God, in whom he was always well-pleased, would not have suffered.

4. We can suffer nothing but what our God, our Friend, our Father, knows we suffer, and knows that a suffering condition is the best for us. When poor Christians are kept, by the bloody Inquisition in dark Holes and Caves from the eyes of all the world, they cannot be kept from the eye of God, *Rev. 2. 13. I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan seat is*; this was the encouragement which Christ gave his persecuted Church of *Pergamos*; thy condition is known to that God whose heart is as tender, as his eye piercing, and whose arm can reach as far as his eye, and whose wisdom knows how to direct the sufferings of every believer for his own, his Churches, and that believers real good.

5. Be often comparing God and creatures together, that great God who suffers in, and with his suffering people, and those little small things called devils and men that bring sufferings upon them; make thy soul to know and understand the difference between the little trifling bubble promises of the world, and the great precious, solid and massie promises of God; and let faith tell thee, that the threatnings of a raging Devil, a storming *Nebuchadnezzar*, or a furious multitude, are but the noise of a Pot-gun, if compared with the thunder of Gods dreadful Threatnings. Remember what God saith to his afflicted Church, *Isa. 51. 12. Who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall dye and of the son of man which shall be made as grass? and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, &c?* In a word, think thus with thy self, man cannot do all that he seems able to do, nor all that he resolves and boasts that he will do, but God can do all that he hath said he will do, and he will do, for his suffering servants more than they can hope or think. Let us heartily believe that God can easily recompence us for whatever we may lose for him; but all the creatures in the world are not able to make amends for that which Apostacy from God will deprive us of; Oh Sirs, could we but heartily believe this, what a sorry temptation would persecution be? If this faith were strong, persecution would be exceeding weak: if faith could see, men and devils able to do nothing, and God able to do all things, then persecution would be able

able to do nothing; and such a faith would be able to do, and to suffer all things.

And thus I have spoken to both the parts of this practical Case of Conscience, and shall now close up all with a word of Exhortation, That if it be such a real ground of trouble, &c. then let us make it our earnest prayer to God, that our Land may still be a *Goshen*, and a *Valley of Vision*, and not an *Egypt*, or the *vale of the shadow of death*, that we may still enjoy the ordinances of the Gospel, and the company and society of good men; that our lot may never fall among *Ezekiel's* Scorpions, or pricking briars, and grieving thorns, *Ezek.* 2. 6. and 28. 24. Let us heartily pray for that blessedness mentioned *Psalms* 65. 4. *That the Lord may choose us, and cause us to approach unto him, that we may dwell in his Courts, and be satisfied with the goodness of his house.*

And now I have said all that I have to say, and I leave the rest to the Lord, who will direct the hearts of his people, and will give them grace to do his will.

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How



How is Hypocrisie discoverable and Curable?

Luke 12. 1.

First of all, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is Hypocrisie.



When our Lord and Saviour had finisht his heavenly soul-searching Sermon in the Chapter foregoing, he came so close in the application to the Scribes and Pharisees, a proud hypocriticall people, that they (not able to indure their pride and hypocrisie should be so soundly convinced and openly detected) combined and contrived, (by urging, and Luk. 11. 53, 54. watching and catching words) to accuse him

and stop his mouth at least, if not his breath. These contrivances and John 21. 17. practises of theirs, were not unknown to him that knew all things, and what effect it wrought in Christ, you find in this verse of the Text; he preacheth the same things, and in the same manner and sharpness of stile at the next opportunity.

In the meantime, is it, saith the greek: *in those, or in which times* that they were thus plotting and contriving, Christ is boldly preaching the same Doctrine that they were persecuting, was as bold for the truth as they were politick against it.

And in those very days, and in the midst of these contrivements against his preaching; the people as much loved the Doctrine that the Pharisees persecuted: an innumerable multitude were gathered together to see and hear him. A *myriade*, too many thousands to be easily numbered, flocked and thronged so to him, that they even trode one upon another, and then he began to say to his Disciples (they were nearest to him, but so as the people heard it,) and he taught

taught them; and that was his intent, as you may see *vers. 40, 42.*

Rom. 1. 8.

First of all, *Beware of*, for the adverb is not to be joyned to the verb *taught*, but to the word *beware*, i. e. *monere*, first of all is not used distributively, but eminently; as much as to say chiefly, especially *beware*, &c. so it is used by the Apostle, *first I thank my God for you all*, (that is chiefly) (that your faith is spoken of through the world.

Beware and avoid this leaven of hypocrisie wherewith the Pharisees doctrine and conversation is so leavened; take heed, beware especially, chiefly of hypocrisie.

In the Text is represented a precious Sermon in its preaching, with the circumstances of it.

Wherein is observable.

1. The time, it was in that juncture of time when they had counselled and determined, but had not yet executed their counsels.

2. The Preacher, Christ himself the great Prophet of the Church, in the exercise of his Prophetical Office.

3. The auditors, his Disciples and innumerable multitude of people.

4. His first Doctrine is, *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees* And this Doctrine is confirmed by Reason, *vers. 2.* and improved by inference, *vers. 3.*

Many useful lessons might be commended from the other particulars, but my meditations are confined to the last, the Doctrine, the caution, *Beware of the leaven*, &c. and only spend as much time in opening the Text and Doctrine, as will let me in to give direction, how to discern, and how to be delivered from this dangerous leaven of hypocrisie: which is according to your desires unto me for your instruction in this particular.

The words naturally yield you this Doctrine.

Doctr.

Matth. 23.

Hypocrisie is a dangerous leaven, which Ministers and people are chiefly and especially to beware of, and acquit themselves from. Hence you have a Chapter of woes against it.

Isa. 1. 11, 12.

Isa. 66. 3.

And it is represented, as that which renders odious to the Lord, and defiles his choicest Ordinances, and our best duties if it cleave to them.

Hos. 6. 4.

And puts God to sad complaints and exprobrations of such a people: *What shall I do unto thee O Judah? what shall I do unto thee O Ephraim? for your righteousness is as a morning cloud: all shew, no truth, no showers.*

And

And hath been the ruin of many forward and glorious professors, as *Baalam*, *Jehu*, *Saul*, and many other persons of great parts, and many great performances, and one would conceive of great hopes too: but they, and their works, and their hopes all are perished, *the hypocrites hope shall perish.* Job 8.13.

The explication of this Doctrine would lye in the speaking to these particulars:

1. What *hypocrisie* is.
2. How it is resembled by *leaven*.
3. Why called the leaven of the *Pharisees*.
4. Wherein is it so *dangerous*.

1. What *hypocrisie* is: Much of the nature of a thing is many times discovered in its name; the name is a breif description.

The word *hypocrisie* properly signifies an *actor* or *stageplayer*, a personator of other men in their speech, habit, and action. The Hebrew word signifieth both a *wicked* man and a *deceiver*. And it is observed, that those whom *David* the devoutest man called *wicked*, *Solomon* the wisest man calls *fools*, and *Job* the most upright man calls *hypocrites*: all is but one and the same thing under divers names.

Hypocrisie then is but a feigning vertue and piety it seems to put on, and vice and impiety it conceals and would seem to put off. It is indeed *vice in a vizor*: the face is vice, but virtue is the vizor. The form and nature of it is *imitation*: the ends are *vain glory*, to be seen of men, or some gain or carnal respects.

There is a *gross* hypocrisie whereby men pretend to the good they *know* they have not: and there is a formall *close* hypocrisie, whereby men deceive others and themselves too; are hypocrites and do *not* Luk. 18. *know it*: In this case it is probable the *Pharisee* was, and those signified Mat. 25. by the *five foolish Virgins*, and all *formall* Christians that are not regenerated by the spirit, nor put into Christ by faith.

This is a subtle evill, a secret poyson, a close contagion; and here it is infinite mercy and grace that we do not all split and perish. and if we can scape this, if we are indeed sincere, we are out of the greatest danger of all the leaven of hypocrisie. To direct you to find out, and to purge out this, shall be my especiall endeavour at this time.

2. How is hypocrisie resembled by *leaven*? Briefly thus:

1. Leaven is hardly discerned from good dough by the sight, and as hardly is hypocrisie distinguished from piety: *You outwardly appear*

Matt 23. 18.
1 Cor. 5. 6.

appear righteous unto men, but within you are full of hypocrisie and iniquity.

2. Leaven is very spreading, a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump: and so it is a great deal of mischief hypocrisie doth, it spreads over all the man, and all his duties, parts, performances, leavens all, as we may observe, *Isa. 1. 12, 13, 14, 15. Esa. 66. 3.*

Mal. 2. 3.

3. Leaven is of a sour tast, and ingratefull smell; so is hypocrisie to God and man, *I will spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn assemblies*: all were leavened with hypocrisie, and were accounted and favoured but as dung in the nostrils of the Lord.

Act 5.

How odious and loathsome was that service of *Ananias and Saphira*, both to the holy Ghost and to the Church, because it was leavened with hypocrisie.

Matth. 18.

Luk. 16. 14, 15

4. Leaven is of a swelling nature, it extends and puffs up the dough: and so doth hypocrisie; it is all for the praise of men: the Scribes and Pharisees were all for preheminance, chief places, chief seats, chief appellations, to be called *Rabbi, Rabbi*: and if others will not admire and overvalue them, they will admire and advance themselves: *I am not as this Publicane. You are they that justify your selves, but God knoweth your heart, for that which is highly esteemed among men, is an abomination to the Lord.* They highly esteemed of themselves, they justified themselves: they derided Christ for not having the same thoughts of them: Pride and vain-glory is the inseparable companion, if not the mother of hypocrisie.

3. Why is it called the leaven of the *Pharisees*? Because they were leavened with it to purpose, they were exact and supereminent in this devilish art of personating and counterfeiting to the life. The devil indeed is the arch-hypocrite of the world, *transforming himself into an Angell of light*: his first-born in this generation are the Scribes and Pharisees; his next born the *Jesuites*, so like their predecessors the Pharisees, that a man may believe that Christ looked so farre as to them in *Matth. 23.* and strook at them through the Pharisees sides, that they were indeed the types, but the Pope Cardinals, Prelates, and Jesuites, the antitype. Their Doctrines are a-like leavened, they both set up traditions, superstitious customes and forms, against and above the Word of God, when once they come in competition: they both would ordinarily suspend and dispence with Gods commands, but most rigorously impose their own, and that under severe penalties: and both upon the account of extraordinary

ditary holiness, and high actings of devotion. And so for their conversation, there was gross hypocrisie in all to be seen; prayed in corners of the streets, gave alms openly, disfigured themselves that they might appear to fast, So the *Jesuites* (if we may believe some of themselves being converted) and many of the *Saculars* that know them well enough, affect the name, but hate the reality of true piety and devotion. They would be accounted as *Henry the 4th.* of *France* said of them, *Timothies* at home in the Colledge, *Chrysostomes* in the pulpit, and *Augustines* in disputation, this they would be accounted. though it be *nomen inane & crimen immane*, they would have the name though not the thing; for that is the nature of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisie.

4. Wherein is this leaven of hypocrisie so dangerous, that Ministers and people, ought firstly, chiefly to beware of it? A very little and briefly of that:

There is great danger of it, and great danger by it.

There is great danger of it: 1. For we have the ground of the matter in our selves, hearts deceitfull above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know thy wickedness? *The Lord search the heart, and try the reins, &c.* As if none besides the Lord knew the bottomless depths and deceits of the heart. In the heart are those lusts and affections, that feed and foment all the hypocrisie in the world: pride, vain-glory, concupiscence, carnall wisdom; were it not for these, there would not be an hypocrite living.

2. The Devill watcheth night and day to set fire to this towne, he is fitted to the purpose, and filled with raging desire to comply with a filthy heart, and to ingender this spurious off-spring of hypocrisie. He hath in readines his wiles, and his depths, his baits, and his snares; and for a false heart, hath false ways, false Doctrines, false faiths, false seasons, false ends and aims, *vix caret effectu*, when two such be agreed to such a purpose, hardly will they be frustrated.

3. And that we may not be secure, there are before our eyes and in our view dreadfull examples: *Balaam* a great Prophet, *Judas* an Apostle familiar with Christ: *Saul*, *Jehu*, *Herod*, and *Agrippa*, famous Kings: *Five Virgins* conspicuous and most confident: *Ananias* and *Sapphira* eminent converts: *Alexander*, and *Demas* confessors, and in some degree Martyrs: it may grieve and make a tender heart tremble, to think, what they became, and what is become of them. To teach him that standeth to take heed least he fall, and all

of us to our dying day, to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisie.

2. And there is great danger by it: 1. The loss of all that is done: Mat. 19. Christ will say as to that young man *yet thou wantest one thing*, sincerity: wouldst thou have Heaven too? why then didst thou all things for the praise of men? *thou hast thy reward*, and art over-paid: *depart from me you that work iniquity*.

2. Frustrating of hopes, great hopes, hopes of glory and Heaven, Job 8. 13. and escaping eternall misery: all these hopes must *perish* to the hypocrite: perish like a ship at the very mouth of the haven, perish whiles they are crying *Lord, Lord*: perish into everlasting horror, and eternall despair.

3. Full detection, and manifesting of them in the sight and face of all the world, for *there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nor hid that shall not be known*: the vizard will be then taken off which was feigned sanctity; and the face will appear which was indeed double iniquity, and for going about to coulin God, and the world, and his own soul, the miserable hypocrite will be left to eternall, intolerable confusion. To be detested, and derided by God, Angels and Saints; to be insulted on by the devils and damned to all eternity.

4. And in Hell the hypocrite *shall be beaten with many stripes*; for he knew his Masters will, and pretended he was doing of it, and yet *did it not*. Shall he that judged others to Hell lye lower in Hell, and have more of Hell than those condemned by him? shall it be worse with a proud Pharisee than with a Publicane, nay a damned Publicane? is Hell the portion of Hypocrites? are they the freeholders, and all others but tennant and inmates with them? or else if there be a worse place in Hell, must it be theirs? it must be so, for the nearer Heaven the more of Hell, and that will be the Hell of Hell to all eternity. Surely then hypocrisie is a dangerous thing, there is exceeding danger of, and danger by this leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie.

Use. I shall commend but one Use to be made of this Doctrine at this time, and it is the *beware* in the Text.

To stir and provoke you to put forth your utmost care, diligence and circumspection, to *beware of this leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie*.

Here I could shew you how much you are concerned to beware of the Pharisees leaven in Doctrinals, to beware of Doctrines advancing

advancing any thing in man; or of man: doctrines that are derived from any other fountain, than the pure Word of God, as traditions, Enthusiasmes, impulses, besides or against the Word: doctrines of will-worship, superstition, voluntary humility, &c. doctrines ascribing too much to, and laying too much stress on externals in worship not instituted by Christ: doctrines of rigid imposition of things indifferent: doctrines that have a tendency to blind obedience and implicate faith. Whoever reads the New Testament, may soon discern such were their doctrines, and this is the leaven of the Pharisees in doctrinals; and truly you had need to take care of this, for doctrines and principles have no small influence on conversation and practice.

But I shall choose rather to prosecute this Use, by endeavouring to give an Answer and resolution to two Questions, which together constitute a great and weighty Case of Conscience.

Quest. *How may we discover and find out this subtil close evil of hypocrisie, and convince our own and others souls that we are guilty of it, and under the danger of it?*

I must here first premise some general Cautions, and then produce some particular evidences and discoveries of it. I shall not meddle at all with gross hypocrisie, which is usually known both to the Hypocrite himself, and frequently apparent to others too. *Some mens sins are open before hand, going before to judgement, and some men they follow after:* But I shall labour to trace out and unkennel that *latent*, close, and deep Hypocrisie, formally self-deceiving Hypocrisie, whereby the Hypocrite may cousin others, and himself too

Here 1. I must premise these Cautions and Negations;

1. That *hic labor, hoc opus*, my task is very hard, my work difficult, *Caution. 1.* nice and curious; that it is very difficult to find out the hypocrisie of ones own heart, much more to convince others of the hypocrisie in theirs, for the heart of man is deceitfull above all things. And hence Jer. 87. 9. the most serious, inquisitive, jealous, and heart searching Christians have to call God in to their help in this work, *Search me O God and know my heart, try me and know my reins, &c.* Search my heart and try my reins, examine whether there be any way of wickedness in me.

2. That as difficult as it is, yet it is possible and feasible, for we are not commanded impossibilities, when we are required to *search* Lam. 3. 40. *and try our ways and turn unto the Lord:* to examine our hearts and 2 Cor. 13. 5. *to prove our selves whether we be in the faith:* whether our own hearts

condemn

- condemne us not, *David, Heman, Job and Paul, 2 Cor. 11. 12.* these all examined their own hearts, and attained thereby to a knowledge and sense of their own sincerity. And we are not directed to absurdities, when we are cautioned to beware of men, to take heed of those that come in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves. And we are not herein bid to make Brick without straw, for the spirit of a man which is in him knoweth the things of a man, and as face answereth to face in a glass, so doth the heart of man to man. Nay we have a far greater help, viz. the Spirit of God which searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. One of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit in the primitive Church, and very necessary for those times (in which Satan was very busie, and the Canon of Scripture not compleated) was the gift of discerning of spirits: some think that by vertue of this gift, Peter discerned Ananias and Saphira their hypocrisie, and afterwards Simon Magus his too, which Phillip could not do, as not having that gift, or such a measure of it; but indeed there was no need of any extraordinary gift to discern Simon Magus by; to any man that had reason and but common illumination, Simon Magnus his hypocrisie might easily and clearly appear in that motion of his [*Sell me this gift.*] Who but an hypocrite could have thought it had been to be sold? and who but an hypocrite would have offered money for it? It was easie to conclude him in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity.
- And the Ministers of the Gospel have authority, calling, and commission (and therefore gifts) to detect and bewray the guiles and wiles, the depths and deceits and snares of Satan, much more the workings and turnings of mens deceitfull hearts; and the Word of God (which is the main and principall weapon of their warfare) is quick and powerfull, a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart: and it casts down imaginations, and brings into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Therefore while we have this Word and Spirit, it is possible (though difficult) to discover the hypocrisie of our own spirits, and to direct others to find out theirs.
- Caution 3.** It is not a poor souls fearing and doubting his hypocrisie, accusing and charging himself with it, crying out of himself as a wretched man by reason of it, that concludes and determines he is such. See David in *Psal. 51. 10, 11, 12.* charging himself so; and the Church accusing her self of erring from Gods ways, and having their hearts hardened from his fear; and yet their own expressions in the Verses before,

before, manifest the frame of their spirits to be exceeding tender and humble. Holy Mr. Bradford would many times subscribe himself in his Letters, *John the hypocrite, and a very painted sepulchre.* Agur one of the wisest men living, condemns himself for being *more brutish than any man, and not having the understanding of a man,* And David, one of the holiest and devoutest men living, upon an ordinary temptation, viz. the prosperity of the wicked, was very apt to charge the wayes of God with unprofitableness; *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency;* but afterward seeing his errour, he chargeth it so upon himself, that he upbraids and condemns himself for *foolish and ignorant, and a very beast before God.* It is usuall with the best men to have the worst thoughts of themselves:

1. Partly, because as God will give most grace to the humble; so there is great need of giving more humility to those that have most grace.

2. Partly, because where there is true grace, there is an insatiable desire of more. The children of God have never enough of communion with God, nor of conformity to him: they seldome look back and say, this thou *hast*: but still press forward to this thou *hast not*, and this thou *must* and this thou *must* have.

3. And partly, because as there is much difference between faith in its direct and its reflected act between knowing God, and knowing that we know him; between believing, and knowing that we believe: so there is between having sincerity, and finding a feeling of it constantly; between not being hypocrites, and a constant confidence of it; which would amount to no less than full assurance. This is not granted to all, and seldome to any at all times, that so there may be a season for the exercise of other graces, humility, fear and trembling, fear of solicitude, and diligence in making our calling and election sure. And this is to be remembered and observed, viz. That God likes us never the worse that Satan is so much our enemy; but much the better, that by humility, lowliness of mind, and self-denial, we seem to be our own enemies.

4. Nor are they foul failings, nor dangerous failings into gross sins (if a man die not impenitently in them) that do constitute an hypocrite; indeed reigning sin doth. The falls of Gods people may be *Horrenda tempestates, & flenda naufragia.* The grievous falls of Gods people do evidencethere is *hypocritie* in them; but not that they are hypocrites. David was guilty of adultery and murder, and

and putt up with exceeding pride and vain-glory, in the multitude of his Subjects, and strength of his Kingdome: but *Dauids* repenting and rising again, cleared him from being an hypocrite, so that the Spirit of God testifies from his own mouth, that *he was upright, and kept himself from his iniquity*, i. e. from the raige and continuance of it; and after his fall he was called a man after Gods own heart: *Thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept all my Commandments, and followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in my sight.* The Lord overlookt his adultery and murder; for indeed he had put away his sin (or made it pass over, as it is in the Original) that is to Christ, *Hezekiah* heart was lifted up; and he rendered not according to the benefit done unto him; but *Hezekiah* was humbled, and the wrath of God came not upon him all his dayes; he was not an hypocrite, no *he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.* So *Peter* denied and forswore his Master, of many warnings, and many promises to the contrary; yet he repented and wept bitterly: his fall shewed him to be a weak frail man; but proved him not hypocrite. *Job* confessed himself a sinner, and that many were his iniquities and transgressions; but *Job* would never confess himself an hypocrite: no, he would keep his integrity till he died; for it is not the falling into sin, or the being guilty of it; but regarding iniquity in the heart, that denominates an hypocrite; otherwise all men were hypocrites, for certainly all men are sinners, all shut up under sin.

Caution 5. 5. Nor is it backsliding into the same sinnes that makes a man an hypocrite: *David* had got into a way of lying to save his life: viz. *1 Sam. 21.* in the 2d verse he told onelye, in the end of the verse another, and in the 8th, verse another. He prays that God would take from him the way of lying. And the promise of Mercy and pardon is not only to sinners, but backslidings; *I will heal their backslidings.* And such are invited to return to God: *Return thou backsliding Israel, and I will heal your backslidings Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.* Indeed to be bent to backsliding is a dangerous sign of prevailing hypocrisie, and yet some in this case shall turn and walk after the Lord. We do not read of the people of God, that they did revolt and backslide into the same gross sinnes after repentance; nor *David* into adultery; nor *Peter* to faintheartedness, nor *Paul* to persecution. But yet this may be so, and provision is made in that case, by the promise of healing backslidings.

backslidings. Though it cost them dear to recover their peace, after revolting into gross sins; after pardon and peace spoken, and it will lie upon their consciences as an heavy aggravation of their sin and folly. But yet it doth not conclude that all was done in hypocrisie before, and that they were but meer hypocrites; no more than *Solomons* falling and Idolatry (which he repented of, witness the book of *Ecclesiastes*) doth conclude him an hypocrite when he built the Temple, and was the *Jedidiah*, the beloved of the Lord.

6. Nor is it every degree of tendency to hypocrisie, that denominates a man an hypocrite, and brings him under the condemnation to have his portion with hypocrites. For there is the seed of this as well as of all other sins in the heart: and the holy Prophet *Jeremy* Jer. 17. 9. cries out, *the heart is deceitful*, &c. he meant his own heart as well as others; and *Solomon* the wisest man gives this advice, *keep thy heart*. Proverbs were experiments, his own, and *David* the devoutest, saith, *all men are liars*, all deceitful; and there are the remains of hypocrisie, in the best, the reign of it is only in hypocrites; hypocrisie may have its presence, but not predominance in the sincerest children of God. Thus you see what doth not conclude an hypocrite, though it come very near.

2. Now I shall shew what cannot clear and acquit a man from an hypocrite, though it proceed very fairly, and very far, which makes it so difficult to discover this leaven of the Pharisees, hypocrisie.

1. It doth not acquit and discharge a man from this charge of hypocrisie: That they hear the Word with some delight; that they believe with some faith, so did the *flowy ground*. That they take some pains for it, so did they *Joh. 6*. That they perform some duties in obedience to it, so did *Herod*, Mark 6. That they are moral and without blame in some things outwardly, so was the *young man*. That they are zealous against some publick corruptions, so was *Jehu*. That they have illumination and excellent knowledge, by a common work of the spirit; so have the *Devils*, *Judas*, and those *Apostates*, Heb. 6. That they had some sweet tastes and relishes from the Word imbraced, so had they in *Heb. 6*. and no doubt *Ananias* and *Saphira* had. Nor doth this acquit them and set them out of danger, that they have some serious cares and fears about their salvation: so had *Felix*, so had the *sinners in Zion*, they were afraid, *Isa. 33. 14*. *fearfulness hath surprized the hypocrites*: they were afraid of dwelling

K k k k

ling

Rom. 8. 13. ling with devouring fire, and everlasting burnings. Judas and Spira had fears to purpose: and the spirit of bondage is but a common work of the spirit, if it rest there; in Pharaoh there was fear but no sincerity: in the Devils, fear but no penitency: nor is it some reluctancy against sin by an awakened conscience; Herod had so, and Pilate had so, Balaam so: nor many desires of good; Balaam desired to die the death of the righteous, The five Virgins desired Oyl: there be the desires of the sloathful, that even kill them; desires like the turning of a door upon hinges, never the farther off: desires of the wavering man, the double-minded man, when a man hath some mind to grace, but more to lust: as Augustine that prayed for grace and chastity, but his heart secretly prayed the while, not yet Lord. There may be pouring out of prayers as the Ninevites, they cried mightily; they poured forth a prayer when thy chastening was upon them and yet they brought forth but wind: When he slew them then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God; nevertheless they did but flatter him with their mouth, and lied to him with their tongues, &c. Nor is it some hopes, *Matth. 25. Joh. 8. 13. Luke 18.* If all this cannot save a man from the guilt of hypocrisie, and portion of hypocrites, what shall? If these come short of Heaven, where shall they appear that come far short of them? Oh then who can be saved, *Streight is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few find it.* Salvation work is to be wrought out with fear and trembling. Beware then of the heaven, &c.

Prov. 26. 14.
Jam. 1. 6, 7.
Aug in Confess.
Jonah 3. 8.
Mat. 26. 16, 17.
Pla. 68. 34, 36.
Ezek. 13. 24.
Phil. 2. 12.

How then may we know how it is with our souls; whether we are in the number of hypocrites, and tending to their portion? whether this deluding, destroying, predominating, damning leaven of hypocrisie be in us?

Sign 1. 3. A loving of the world, and the things of the world; *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*: this is a fearful evidence of hypocrisie, for it is inconsistent with, and destructive of, the love of God; and the loving God above all things, is the very essence, the *summa totalis* of sincerity, and whatsoever contraries this, is the very essence of hypocrisie. I know there be many subterfuges and evasions, and it is an hard matter to convince men, that they love the world in *S. Johns* sense. But if a man make these lusts of the eye, of the flesh, and pride of life; honours, riches, carnal and sensual pleasures, his aim, his interest, his chief delight: If the heart and affections be let out to these things immoderately: If the sweetest, freest thoughts of the soul be let out to them; either about the getting,

getting, enjoying, or desiring; or admiring, or advancing them. If the activity and indeavours of the soul bend and are employed chiefly this way; though there may be many excellent performances, expressions, affections, yet the leaven of the Pharisee is there, and sours all, and all the rest is but in hypocrisie. This leavened all *Balaams* pretences, divinations; all his goodly expressions, and professions, both to God, the Angels, and men; that he would do nothing, speak nothing, but what God would have him; (as much as to say, he would be upright, and sincere,) yet still he looked after Jude 11. the reward, (*Balaams* promotion;) this was the error of *Balaam*, he followed the wages of unrighteousness: and this leavened all *Judas* his hearing and conversing with Christ, his over-officioulness. Some conceive from *Judas* his kissing Christ in the garden, &c. that he was more than ordinarily familiar and officious about him, and made more pretences of love and service to him, but he appeared a painted sepulchre, an hypocrite; he loved the wages of iniquity, it was the world and hypocrisie were predominant in him; and now he is gone to his own place, the place and portion of hypocrites: he was as it were out of his place, or in anothers place all the while before: and this leavened all the Pharisees alms, fastings, prayers, professions, and pretences; they were covetous faith one Evange- Luke 16. 14.
list: and they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God, John 12. 43.
faith another: and that is in effect, they loved the favour of men, more than the favour of God: in short, they loved the world, and f John 2. 16.
the love of the Father was not in them. There can be no serving God, Matth. 6. 24.
and Mammon, if we cannot moderate and temperate affections, both 1 Cor. 7. 27, 30.
in the desires, in the affections, in the use, in the injoyments, and moderate our cares and griefs in the loss and want of worldly things; to have them as if we had them not, to rejoyce in and for them as if we rejoyced not: to grieve for the want of them as if we grieved not: seeing they are to us as if they were not; they are a *scheame*, a representation that passeth away. Nay if the world be not Gal. 6. 15.
crucified to us, and we to the world, we are still in danger of this gall of bitterness, this leaven of hypocrisie. This is exemplified in the Jews in Babylon, they would come to the Prophet, and sit before him as Gods people (with much seeming reverence, and appearance of devotion and affection) they hear thy words but they will not do them, for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. Therefore as you love your souls, beware of the love of the world, and set not your affections on things below,
K k k k 2

low, but on things above, else you will not be able to avoid the guilt and danger of hypocrisie.

Sign 2.
1 Thef. 1.5.

Heb. 4.12.
2 Cor. 10.5.

Pfal. 36.2.

1 King. 21.20.
1 King. 22.8.

Mar. 6. 17, 18.

Act. 24.25.

1st. 5.

Sign 3.

2. A not loving the Word of God, a not receiving it as the Word of God, when it comes as the Word of God in power. It is the property of the Word of God to be quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing of soul and spirit, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, to cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. This is the Word of God, and this it doth as the Word of God, these are the properties of it. Such a Word of God an hypocrite cannot love, because he loves this carnal sinful self, he loves his lusts which this Word opposeth. *He flattereth himself in his own eyes until his iniquities be found to be hateful.* The Word in power will shew him that all is ill, when he flattereth himself that all is very well. *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy, saith Ahab?* An hypocrite thinks he hath no greater enemy than a faithful Minister, because hypocrisie hath no greater enemy than the Word of Truth, which will detect and make it odious. So *Ahab* hated *Micajah* and his Ministry, because he prophesied evil to him; in his evil wayes, he spake the Word of God, the truth to him, which *Ahab's* corrupt life, and hypocritical heart could not bear. *Herod* heard *John Baptist* gladly in other things, but when he preached against his having his brother's wife, when he came home to his conscience, to his very darling sin, then *Herod* stopt his mouth, *shut him up in prison.* *Felix* trembles, and dismisseth *Paul* when he came so close; an hypocrite may love to hear the same Minister on another subject. The very notion of Religion is amiable and acceptable to ingenuous persons, nay he may love the Word, may come to others, but to himself (during the predominacy of hypocrisie) that the powerful Word neither read, nor preached can be well-come, because it applies it self to the cutting off of his right hand, and plucking out his right eye.

3. A long and continual unprofitableness under the powerful Word of God, is a fearful sign of hypocrisie. What warnings and instructions had *Judas*? What convictions and reprehensions had *Ahab* and *Herod*? and yet as to those things which the word opposed they were as if they were not. If men that hear much, mind nothing, and move away they are still where and

they were ten, twenty years ago, though they hear much, and are as *earth that drinketh in the rain*; nay though they have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if yet they bring not forth meet fruit for him that dresseth it, that ground *is rejected*, that heart is near to cursing and burning, there is some guile and hypocrisy there, there would be some growing else. 1 Pet 2.3. When the word is *precept upon precept, line upon line* (i.e. very plentiful) and yet no amendment, there is hypocrisy, they will *fall backward, be broken, and snared and taken*. Oh 'tis no small matter to be dead, unprofitable, unaltered hearers. It is a fearful sign of hypocrisy, and that there are many hypocrites in the bosome of the Church.

4. The principles and ends of mens actions and performances are a great discovery of the sincerity, or insincerity of mens hearts. If mens principles be no higher than good education, and being conversant with good or strict men; which seems to be Paul's case, or no higher than good nature and moral qualifications, this seems to be the young man's case; they are no farther than those were at that time, in an ignorant and insincere condition. He that is really and sincerely a good Christian doth all as *from God and Christ, he is all, and in all*. Christ is wisdom and sanctification to him. He acts and performs duties not only from strength of parts, and acquired qualifications, but from strength of grace, and infused habits, from God, and for God, from a new heart; Ezek. 36.25, from the Law written in the heart, from the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and constraining to love; from the Divine nature communicated to the heart; from Christ by his Spirit dwelling in the heart; from the fear of God possessing and establishing the heart. These be the springs and principles of a sincere Christians spiritual life and actions; and where they act and bear rule, it is no wonder if such motions and performances be produced, as the world may admire, but not imitate. Saul's life (after his Conversion) was a kind of constant miracle, so much he did, and so much he suffered, and so much denied himself, that if he lived in these dayes his life would be a miracle; but yet if we consider the principles that he was acted by, the great wonder will be, not that he did so much, but that he did no more, for faith he, *Christ liveth in me, and the life that I live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, &c.* And so the ends of a mans actions are a great discovery of sincerity or hypocrisy. If a mans ends be lower than God himself, and obeying, glorifying, walking with, and enjoying God,

Sign 4.

Act. 26. 5

Phil. 3. 5. 6.

Mark 10.

Col. 3. 11.

1 Cor. 1. 3.

Rom. 11. 2.

Jer. 31. 33.

Rom. 3. 5.

2 Cor. 5. 19.

1 Pet. 1. 4.

Eph. 3. 17.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

Jer. 31. 40.

Gal. 2. 20.

- God, if either praise, gain, reputation, nay acceptance with good people; nay if a mans end be to stop the mouth of natural conscience *only*, or *only* to avoid danger and wrath to come. These may be the works of a Saint, but yet the ends of an hypocrite. And *omnis actio nisi modificata à fine suas quas avertere amittit laudes*. Balaam spake religiously, multiplied Altars and Sacrifices, but his end was not God, but the wages of iniquity. *Iehu* destroyed *Abahs* house, executed vengeance, Gods judgements against that wicked Family, resolutely and thoroughly destroyed *Baal*, &c. but his ends were carnal, the establishment of the Kingdom to him, and his Family: *Abah* and the *Ninevites* fasted in sackcloth, but it was *meerly* to avoid the judgement threatned. The *Israelites* cried and prayed, but they did *but howl for corn and wine*. The *Jewes* in Captivity fasted, but *did you at all fast to me, even to me*, saith the Lord. It seems men may pray, and yet not cry to the Lord, fast, and yet not to the Lord. It is the end dignifies, or debaseth the action, rectifies or adulterates it. Look to your ends if you would not be hypocrites. If your end be less than God, his glory and pleasing of him; You are but *empty Vines*, and bring forth fruit to your selves. Simplicity in ones ends accompany sincerity in the actions; when not *fleshy wisdom*, but the *grace of God* carries and governs the action, then we may have *rejoycing*, else all may be in hypocrisy.
- Sign 5. If thou canst not bring thy heart to suffer for the Name of *Christ*, when thou hast a good Cause, and a good Cull, and amongst the good people of God, though thou *hear the word*, and *receivest it with joy*, for a time, yet when persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by thou art offended; if there be no more deep rooting of it in thee, but in temptation thou fall away, it is apparant thy heart is but *stony ground*, and thou art leavened with *hypocrisie*. If your faith cannot bear the tryal, if it be not *furnace faith*, *tryed faith*, it is not *precious faith*, it is but *common faith*, *counterfeit faith*; it will not be found to praise honour and glory at the appearance of *Iesus Christ*: nay if thou canst not (in some cases) choose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and esteem the reproach of *Christ* greater riches than the treasures of *Egypt*; it is apparent thy faith, and thy heart is not right, thou hast not a thorough respect to the recompence of reward, thou dost not see him that is invisible. That man that cannot, will not deny himself, take up his cross, and follow *Christ*, he is not a true Disciple of *Christ*, and in the end will find, that in saving his life he hath lost it. Sathan and

and Antichrist must be overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the Rev. 12. 11. word of the testimony; and by not loving our lives to the death, &c. and he that will not suffer with Christ, shall not reign with Christ; and if tribulation occasion men to go out from us, it is because they were Rom. 8. 17. not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued 1 Joh. 2. 19. with us. Tribulation is the touchstone, it will distinguish sincerity from hypocrisy: and though it is true a hypocrite may sometime 1 Cor. 13. suffer, yet he that will never suffer, must be a hypocrite; if we suffer Rom 8. 17. not with him, we shall not reign with him.

6. If thou embracest and favourest any iniquity in thy heart, if there be any corrupt lust, or ungodly way that thou art so wedded to, that thou canst not, wilt not be divorced from, but huggest it in thy bosom, hidest it, pleadest for it, though it seem never so harmless and tolerable, yet if it be against Gods Law, though thou makest many prayers with the Jews, and performest many services, and dost Isa. 1. 16, 17. many things with Herod, and hast many glorious and gracious expressions with Balaam, yet thou art in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity. Thy heart is a divided heart, thou art a double, Hos. 10. 2. unstable person, thy prayers will not be regarded, and all thy services Jam. 1. 6. 7. will be rejected by the All-seeing jealous God, before whom all things Heb. 4. 13. are open and naked, and with whom thou hast to do, because if thou regardest iniquity in thy heart, the rise and root of all thy duties and performances, is but the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy. Me thinks beloved this should startle us, and I wish it may, if any of you should be prickt at the heart, and tremble at this word of God; and ask me what shall we do that we may acquit our selves from this leaven of hypocrisy, and be saved from the wrath it exposeth us to? I should answer,

1. Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many will seek, but shall not Luke 13. 24. be able; that is, be very serious, and thoroughly resolved, and industrious in a case of this weight and concernment, Be diligent that 2 Pet. 3. 14. you may be found of him in peace. Set your heart to these things for is D. ut. 32. 46. it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life, &c. It is so weighty a business, that it is work enough for all your life, and it will be your life of consolation from which will flow, peace, and joy, and assurance. Make but this out clearly that thou art no hypocrite, that hypocrisy is not predominant in thee; but that in simplicity and sincerity of heart thou hast thy conversation (not with carnal wisdom) 1 Cor. 1. 12. thou hast then occasion of much rejoicing; but if thou art negligent in this, thy doubts and fears will hang upon and keep thee low.

low to thy dying day ; nay it were well if that were all, for to be negligent in this business, is as good as to *do nothing*, for it is to do nothing to purpose, and that is to have all thy work undone, and to be undone thy self for ever. Most hypocrites did *seek* to enter in ; *Balaam, Herod, the five foolish Virgins*, had they *strove* they had entred in at the strait Gate. Wishings and wouldings, and sloathful desires to heaven will not place you out of danger of hypocrisie, for very hypocrites have done as much ; but striving indeed, setting your whole heart to it, being very diligent to *purge out this leaven, working out your salvation with fear and trembling, giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure* ; this will place you out of danger, and give you an abundant entrance into the Kingdome of our Lord. If ever that of the English Proverb be true, it is here, *As good never a whit, as never the better*. Indeed there is so much work on our hands, such commands, such promises to believe, such corruptions to subdue, such temptations to resist, the carelesnes of carnal sailing in any of which will charge us with hypocrisie. So many such subtle and powerful adversaries to conflict withal, such a world, such a flesh, such principalities and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places, such deceitful hearts, deceitful above all things, to search, and sift, and purge from this leaven, that it is impossible to be free of it without mighty striving, contending, and giving much diligence.

Phil. 2. 12.

2 Pet. 1. 10, 11.

Phil. 3. 6. 2.

Lam. 3. 40.

Phil. 2. 12.

Phil. 1. 30. 23.

Joh. 8. 13.

2. If you would take heed of hypocrisie, take heed of *security*. There are no greater flatterers, and no greater deceivers of themselves and others than hypocrites, they flatter themselves in their own eyes ; all flattery is dangerous, but *self flattery* of all other most dangerous, and of all others in the business of salvation most pernicious. It is the advice of the Devil, and thy own hypocrisie, to favour thy self, flatter thy self, hope well, &c. The advice of God is, *Search and try your ways, examine your selves*, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*. Yea call upon God to search you. It is a fear of carefulness, and sollicitude, a trembling of jealousy and suspicion, as to our own hearts, not of diffidence, or despair as to God, that we are directed to. Had the foolish Virgins had but this care, this fear, they had had *oil in their vessels*, as well as *Lamps*. Had those glorious professors in *Matth. 7. 22.* had but this jealousy, and suspicion, they might have escaped that dismal sentence, *Depart from me you workers of iniquity*. Perhaps your faith may be but a fancy, your hopes but presumptuous,

ons a spiders web, perhaps your fruit may be but that of an empty vine to your self ; perhaps your prayers may be but howlings for corn and wine ; perhaps your fasting may not be to God, *Commune much with your own heart, and let your spirit make diligent search, keep your heart with all keeping* ; be jealous of every thing your heart hath to do with ; your affairs, friends, comforts, recreations, thoughts, sollicitudes, graces. Oh blessed or happy is the man that *thus feareth* Hof. 10. 1. Hof. 7. 14. Zach. 7. 5. Psal. 71. 6. *always*, he shall never do amiss, this is to be in the fear of God all the day long ; and this fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the end of wisdom, and wisdom it self, for this will make a man wise to escape the wiles of Sathan, and the hypocrisie of his own heart, and so make him wise to salvation. Prov. 28. 14. Prov. 23. 17. Prov. 1. Eccles. 12. Job 28.

3. *Keep God always in your mind*, if we have all from him, we should be all to him ; If we live and move in him, our hearts and minds should be always on him. This is the cause of all the wickedness and hypocrisie in the world, men will not seek after God, *God is not in all their thoughts*. And this is the ground of all the glorious performances of the Saints, they saw him that was invisible, as *Micaiah saw the Lord in his Throne*, and therefore feared not to deal plainly and sincerely with Ahab, though on his Throne. When the Psalmist had convinced and reproved the wickedness and formal hypocrisie of ungodly presumptuous men, he concludes, *Now consider this you that forget God, &c.* Intimating this to be the reason of all ungodly hypocritical conversation, a forgetting God. The remedy must be contrary to the disease : if we would be no hypocrites, we must much remember, think of, and observe, and eye God by faith. *Acquaint thy self with God, and so good shall come to thee*. If men were acquainted with God, and did not forget him, acquainted with his Omniscieny, *Psal. 139. 1, 2.* with his All-sufficiency, *Gen. 17. 1.* with the power of his anger, *Psal. 90. 11.* the infiniteness of his goodness, *Isa. 55. 7, 8.* they would conclude, and live under the awe and power of such conclusions. Oh then he is too great to be tempted and provoked, too excellent to be slighted and undervalued, too good to be lost, too wise to be deceived, and this would suppress and supplant the leaven of the Pharisees hypocrisie. Rom. 11. ult. Psal. 10. 4. Heb. 11. 26, 27. 1 King 22. 19. Psal. 50. 22. Job 22. 21. Mic 7. 18, 19.

4. Be much and daily in the *renewing faith and repentance*. If there be such danger of hypocrisie, there is necessity of renewing faith and repentance for fear hypocrisie may be in them. Rise and return as soon as thou art convinced of thy sin, so did Paul, so did Luke 22. 61. Peter as soon as the Lord turned and looked upon him. If repen-

Jer. 2. 19.

Psal. 51.

tance were hastned after sin, and thou wouldest take care and pains to break thy heart constantly for sin, this would break it from sin. A man should find that *it were an evil and a bitter thing to forsake the Lord, and that his fear was not in thee, and a broken heart God would not despise*, because it is apparent that is no hypocritical heart. And though former faith and repentance may be counterfeit and hypocritical, yet ensuing and renewed faith may be sound and sincere, and we have much ground to renew those acts, whose soundness and validity we have much ground to suspect, if all have been false or fained, or partial formerly, we have the more cause in a new act to give up and bind our souls sincerely to it, and this will free you from hypocrisie.

5. Put forth your greatest strength and care to mortifie those lusts and corruptions that are the fewel to hypocrisie, pride, vain-glory, worldly-mindedness, self-love. These are the fewel of hypocrisie, they beget it, and they nourish it. If the love of the world, and worldly favour did not prevail much over men, there would be no hypocrisie in the world; and cherish and strengthen the graces which cannot consist with it, but will be alwayes fighting against, and opposing it, as love to God, humility, self-denial, heavenly-mindedness, mortifying the flesh, much communion with God, *if these be in you and abound, you shall not be barren nor unfruitful, but shall make your calling and election sure*, and so be out of the peril, yea and much out of the fear of hypocrisie.

Eze. 36. 25, 25.

Deut. 30 6.

Jer. 32. 40.

6. *Press* the Lord much and *urge* him close with the promises of a new heart, of *circumcising your hearts*, and causing you to love the Lord with all your heart, of *putting his fear into your heart*. If he urge and press you (in his word) with his precepts, and your duty, do you urge and press him as much in your prayers) with his promises, spread his own hand-writing and seats before him; as Augustine relates his Mother did in her prayers for his Conversion; say, Lord these promises were made to be made good to some, and why not to me? I hunger, I need, I thirst, I wait; here is thy hand-writing in thy Word, and in the last Sacrament, I had thy Seal affixed to it, I am resolved to be as importunate till I have obtained, and as thankful afterwards, as by Grace I shall be enabled, being convinced I am utterly lost and undone, if thou hearest not the *desires of the humble* in this particular, and if thou dost hear and grant, I am so well acquainted with my self, and mine own heart, that I have nothing to

glory

Aug. Conf. Chiragrapha tua
ingerebat tibi.

Phil. 10. 17.

glory in, but I shall wholly *glory in the Lord*; and I do resolve and believe I shall, to eternity celebrate and magnifie the riches of the glory of thy Grace. Thy promises are the discovery of thy purposes, and vouchsafed as materials for our prayers; and in my supplications I am resolved every day to present and tender them back to thee every day, and if thou wilt have regard to them there, and appear to be a God of truth to my soul, a poor creature that hath long feared to burn in hell for hypocrisie, will be made, secured, and made happy for ever. I am resolved to wait upon thee, and to cast my soul upon thee in this way, and thou hast assured me thou art a *God of judgement*; thou didst promise in judgement, thou knewest what thou didst in making such promises, and thou wilt be a God of judgement, thou knowest when and where to make them good, and thou hast pronounced, *Blessed are all they that wait for thee*; Iſa 30.18. and on thee I will wait, and for this blessing I will hope and look. Aug. Conf. Impoſſibile fili-um tantarum lacrimarum perire. Oh beloved, if there be but such an heart in us, and such wrestlings, as *Ambrose* told *Monica*, a soul of such prayers and tears should not perish.

I could have added much more, but if these Characters and Directions be carefully observed, you will beware of, and shall escape the leaven of hypocrisie. And that you may be careful to observe them,

Consider 1. That the purging out this leaven, is the great care and business of a Christians life; this will afford him fear and trembling work to his dying day; this till it be done, makes *the gate so streight, and the way so narrow to life, that few find it, and if it be done, Matth. 7.13.* renders all the service of Christ ever after an *easy yoke*, and a *light* Matth. 11.30. burden.

2. This if it be done gives us actual possession of the *Kingdom of God* in grace, which consists of *righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, and administers an assured and *abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in glory.* Rom. 14.17. 2 Pet. 1.11.

3. This will prevent the Devils everlasting insulting over us; is this the end of all thy praying and hearing, &c. and defying me? nay upbraiding Christ, as a learned and holy man feared; I have him, I have gotten him from thee, for all thy blood, thy Miracles, thy Gospel, thy wooings, thy beseechings, thy knockings and strivings of thy Spirit; for all thy illuminating them, and making them taste of the powers of the world to come: I have coustened thee of them at thy very gates of heaven, and by my devices shipwrackt them in the

Basil.

Basil.

very mouth of the haven. Oh I would not give the Devil occasion to upbraid and insult thus against Christ at the last day for the world: And this would prevent consciences gnawing and galling to eternity. What are all my desires, my seekings and knockings, prayers, fasts, Sacraments, hearing in season, and out of season, waiting at the posts of Gods house early and late. Have I forsaken so many sins, denied my self so many contents and pleasures, subdued so many lusts, born so many scoffs, suffered so much in my body and estate, and all for hell at last. This would be the hell of hell; and all this may be prevented, if we would *beware of the leaven of hypocrisie*, and seriously observe those Characters, and carefully practice those Directions.

4. Consider the means you have long had, and yet do enjoy, Gods admirable forbearance and patience, a powerful Ministries incessant labours and pains, an awakened consciences clamours, and warnings; a danger, and evils (if you be negligent) intolerable; a reward (if you observe the *beware* in the Text) eternal and inconceivable; your life short and uncertain, your death appointed most certain, and you know not how near; the world and the lusts thereof (even those that feed and foment hypocrisie) passing away, and that now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation: And if you were ever serious in your lives now be so; and if ever God spake to your hearts and consciences, the Lord in mercy speak this, *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees*.

1 Joh. 2. 17.

2 Cor. 6. 2.

What



What must Christians do, that the influence of the Ordinances may abide upon them?

1 Chron. 29. 18.

O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel our Fathers : keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee.

IN the preceding Chapter we have *David's* Oration, or if you will his Sermon, the design of which was, to excite the people to a contribution for the erecting of a Temple, and promoting the publick worship of God. It begins *vers. 2.* of that Chapter, and is continued to the 6th *verse* of this Chapter.

This Sermon was effectual upon the auditory ; *David* had the happiness (which the best Orators , and most powerful Preachers often want) not only *αἰδανὲς λέγειν*, but *αἰδοῦν* : he not only spoke what was in it self perswasive, but did actually perswade his hearers to comply with his design. The effect thereof is expressed *vers. 6, 7, 8.* *they offered*, and (which was the marrow and fatness of their offering) *they offered willingly*. Though will-worship be the worst service of all other, yet those that serve God willingly are the best worshippers : and therefore *David* in this Sermon commends such service to his son, *chap. 28. vers. 9.* *And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.* None serve God with a perfect heart, but those who serve him with a willing mind ; to such a temper were the people wrought by this powerful exhortation, *vers. 9.* *with a perfect heart they offered willingly to*
the

the Lord. Hereupon David much affected with his success in this affair (*David the King also rejoiced with great joy*) his soul being now upon the wing, he flies to God by prayer, and therewith concludes his Sermon. The prayer consists of petition and thanksgiving, both of them, not conformed to any common model; but suiting the particular occasion now before him. He blesteth God for making such an impression upon the hearts of the people, as moved them to offer, and *after this sort* to offer, so chearfully, so generously; from ver. 10, to 18. and beseecheth God still to keep their hearts in such a temper, to make this holy impression durable and abiding, ver. 18. *O Lord God of Abraham, &c. keep this for ever in the imaginations, &c.* Where we have the inforcement of the petition and the matter of it. It is inforced from the Covenant of God, by vertue of which, he was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and had laid an obligation on himself, to have a gracious respect to their posterity; hence this expression is frequently used, being no small encouragement to the faithful, to pray for Covenant-mercies, and to pray in faith.

The matter of the Petition, that which he prays for is, that the effect which his words had upon the people might be durable and continuing, that the efficacy thereof might abide upon their souls, and every part thereof: that it might sink into the depths of their hearts, and stick fast there: that it might pierce through their fancies and *imaginations* into their mind and *thoughts*, and through their *thoughts* into their *hearts* and affections; that the Lord would continue it there, and continue it long there, even for ever.

David was apprehensive what a slippery and inconstant thing the heart of man is, how like a deceitful bow, to which he elsewhere compares it, how apt to slacken on a sudden, when it hath been bended to any good inclinations or resolutions, by the power of the Word, or any other Ordinance. What an unhappy womb it is, how ordinarily holy motions miscarry before the heart hath gone out its full time with them. What danger there was, lest their righteousness, which now made such a flourishing appearance, might prove like the morning cloud, or the early dew. And therefore having raised their hearts to so good a posture, he takes the best course to fix them there. His words having had a powerful influence upon their souls, he useth the best means to render it durable and abiding. Hence Observe,

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The people of God should endeavour to keep the influence of the Ordinances abiding upon their souls.

Doctr.

I must not prosecute this Doctrine in the usual method, but mention it only, as leading us to the Practical Case at this time to be resolved. A conscientious hearer observing what his duty is, will be presently inquisitive how he may perform it, the *duty* is made known in the Observation, the *inquiry* is in the Case before us.

What must be done that the influences of the Ordinances may abide upon us? By the Ordinances we understand those principally which are publick, the Word, Sacraments, and Prayer. The Text and this exercise leads us to have a more special respect to the Word, which we shall a little observe, but so as not to exclude the rest. By the *influence* of the Ordinances, is meant the effect they have upon us, while we are employed in them; their gracious or comforting efficacy, that which tends to make our hearts and lives more holy or more comfortable; that whereby our souls are quickned, strengthened, restored or refreshed. By its *abiding on us*, understand the continuance of this effect after the duty is done, that so the Ordinances of God be not like those humane Ordinances (the Apostle speaks of) which *perish in the using*, Col. 2. 20, 22. If you would have it stated clearly and more at large, take it thus; *What course must we take that the gracious and comforting efficacy of publick Ordinances may not only reach us while we are employed in them, but may continue on us afterwards; so as we may walk under the sense and power thereof all along?*

To resolve this without further preamble, the course you must take for this purpose, lies in the practice of some things; and the avoiding of others. The things to be practised take notice of in these severals:

I. Get new hearts, and get them daily more and more renewed; an old heart is a heart of stone, Ezek. 11. 19. and the hardness of it is not removed but by degrees. Now that which will sink deep into a tender heart, a heart of flesh, (Ezek. 36. 26.) will glide off from an old heart as water from a stone, without leaving any impression: and where none is left none can continue. The good seed which fell on stony ground, it sprang up indeed, but it continued not, *it withered away as soon as it sprang up*, Luk. 8. 6. but they which with an honest and good heart heard the word, they *kept it*, and brought forth fruit with patience (*i. e.* with perseverance,) ver. 15. the fruitful influences of the word abode upon them: A good and honest heart not only hears the word, but keeps

keeps it ; not only brings forth fruit, but persists so doing. The more tender, humble, and spiritual the heart is, the more spiritual fruit and advantage doth it reap from the Ordinances, and the longer doth it continue in possession of those advantages ; the less the soul is renewed, the more resistance doth it offer to the Ordinances ; and the more they are resisted, the weaker is their efficacy ; and the less their efficacy is, the less while doth it continue. A heart thoroughly sanctified, is to the Ordinances like tinder, which soon takes fire, and is apt to keep it till it be forced out : whereas a carnal unmortified heart, is like green wood, whose moistness giving check to the activity of the fire, is not soon kindled, and will soon go out, if it be not well lookt to. Naturalists observe, that transmutation is easie in symbolical elements, such as agree in some prime qualities : water is more easily turned into air than into fire. A holy and spiritual heart will be easily wrought on, by holy and spiritual Ordinances ; for here is an agreement in qualities ; and the more agreement the less opposition, and the less the opposition is, the more easily will it be mastered ; the power of the Ordinances will more easily both take place and keep possession. Holiness makes the soul both receptive and retentive of holy impressions. Make it but your great business to grow every day more holy ; and it will not be so hard a matter, to have the Ordinances work effectually on you, or to have their efficacy continue with you.

2. Labour to be much affected with the Ordinances while you are employed in them. Slight impressions will be soon worn out : and weak influences will quickly spend themselves and vanish. If the Ordinances have but little effect upon you, while you are under them, it is not like to last long : for that which is little is near to nothing, and that which is so near to it, may soon come to nothing. It is not enough that your hearts be a little warmed, but they must burn within you, (*Luke 24. 32.*) while Christ is speaking to you, or you are speaking to him ; if you would have that heavenly heat to be lasting. The good seed miscarried upon one sort of ground in the parable, because it had no *deepness of earth*, *Mat. 13. 5, 6.* it *quickly withered because it took no deep root.* If the Ordinances pierce no further than the surface of the soul, if the work of them be but superficial, if they do not penetrate into the depths of the heart : the efficacy of them is not like to continue. Therefore prepare your hearts before you draw near to God, get them so disposed

fed as they may be capable of lasting influences. The Text directs us to this, O Lord keep this for ever in the imagination, &c. and prepare their heart unto thee. Then is the heart prepared to the Lord when it is made tender, and sensible, and open. Bring tender hearts to the Ordinances, get them broken up beforehand, break up your fallow ground and sow not among thorns, Jer. 4. 3. Hos. 10. 12. A tender heart drinks in divine influences, they insinuate themselves more easily into the intimate recesses of it. That which can make no impression at all upon a Flint, will sink deep into softened wax.

Come with sensible hearts, apprehensive of your spiritual wants and necessities, burdened with your lusts, and corruptions; pained with your inward distempers and soul-grievance. I cannot commend to you any thing more effectual, to make you capable of great and lasting advantages. Such a quick sense of your spiritual condition will open your hearts, and make them ready to receive so much from the Ordinances, as will not be soon spent. Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it, Psal. 81. 10. Now it is desire that opens the heart, and the stronger the desire is, the wider is it opened: Then is the soul wide open when it pants and breaths after God, when it hungers and thirsts after holiness, as appears by equivalent promises, Psal. 107. 9. Matth. 5. 6. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. That which we get by holy duties, is soon spent because it is so little: and we get so little, because we desire no more. We come to the Ordinances *tanquam canis ad Nilum*, too like the Egyptian dog, which laps a little as he runs by the side of Nilus, but stays not to drink: we take but a taste of them as *in transitu*, to little and too cursorily; when as Christ invites us to eat and drink abundantly, Cant. 5. 1. Such cursorory tastes may cheer you a little, but they will not furnish you with strength for continual service: you must feed and feed hungrily, and come with a strong appetite, that you may be capacious of much; a little will not serve you long.

3. Mind the Ordinances after your use of them, be much in meditation if you would have the efficacy of Ordinances to continue long. Be often considering what you have heard, what you have prayed for, what you have received and are obliged to by the Sacraments. Much of Heaven and holiness, is engraved on these Ordinances, and the seal is as it were set upon the heart, while you are

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under them: but after-consideration lays more weight on it, and impresseth it deeper, and so makes the characters both more plain and more durable; for the deeper they are the longer will it be, ere they be defaced.

Most men lose their souls, and the best men lose great advantages for their souls, for want of consideration. There is a quickning, a healing a comforting, a strengthening virtue, in the Ordinances; and this vertue may fall upon your souls, while you are employed in them: but you cannot expect it will stay with you, unless you fix it there, and no better way to fix it, than consideration. This will rouze it up when it lyes dormant and unactive; this will put spirits into it, when it grows weak and languid; this will both diffuse and fasten it, yea it will heighten and improve it. *My heart was hot within me* (saith David, Psal. 39. 3.) *while I was musing the fire burned.* The heart takes fire at the mind, and it is *musings* or consideration that kindles it, and keeps it in, and blows it up: those sparks which fall from heaven upon your hearts, while you are hearing, or praying. &c. they'll die, they will go out, and come to nothing unless you do *ἀναζωοποιῶν*, 2 Tim. 1. 6. unless you blow them up by meditation. *He sent forth his word and healed them*, Psal. 107. 20. The Word hath a salve for every soul-distemper, but that it may be effectual, the plaister must be laid on, and kept on too, till the cure be wrought; the Preacher may apply it, and lay it upon the distempered part, but it will not be kept on without meditation. *How sweet are thy words unto my taste*, saith David, Psal. 119. 103. How came they to be still so sweet? why, *they were his meditation day and night*, the delicious relish of them still continued, because he kept them still upon his palate, by ruminating and musing on them.

The Word of God in the Scripture is as honey in the combe, ther's that which is incomparably sweeter: now by meditation you squeeze out this sweetness, and it will be still dropping comfort and sweet refreshment upon your souls, while you are *pressing* it by consideration. 1 John 2. 14. *I write unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you.* If you would be strong and continue so, the Word of God must *abide* in you; now how can it abide in you, if it have not leave to stay in that, which is but the portal of the soul, if it abide not in your mindes? You lose all for want of consideration, both the gracious and comforting influences of

of the Ordinances, slide from you through this neglect. And no wonder it is so great a damage to you, since it is so great a sin, you cast the Word behind your backs, and throw the Ordinances at your heels, when you do not minde them after you have done with them; and will the Lord encourage any with a durable blessing, under such guilt? will not this provoke him rather to curse your blessings, and blast them in the bud? Meditation is a known duty, and commonly insisted on, and therefore you may be tempted to sleight it; whereas indeed upon this account, you should the more regard it; for since it is a known duty, the neglect of it is a known sin; now to say nothing how inconsistent it is either with grace or comfort, to live in a known sin, how can you expect the efficacy of Ordinances should be continued, while you neglect the means, which the Lord hath appointed, and commended to you, as most effectual for the continuance thereof? The blessing of the Ordinances will not abide upon him, who continues in sin, especially when his sin, is the neglect of that *medium*, which should fix the blessing upon him.

4. Let the efficacy of the Ordinances be pursued presently into act, if they convince you of any neglected duty, fall immediately upon the practise of it. If they make you more resolute, against any carnall or worldly lust, betake your selves presently to the mortifying of it. If they kindle any holy affection to Christ or his people, give some real expression thereof without delay. If they revive any languishing grace, let it be forthwith exercised. This was *David's* practice, *Psal.* 119. 60. you will find this one of the best expedients, for the fixing and securing of those good motions, which are raised in your mindes and hearts by the Ordinances. When the blossoms of a fruit-tree are once knit, though the flourish thereof be gone, and you see nothing but the bare rudiment of the expected fruit; yet you think it more secured from the injury of frosts and winds, than if it were still in the flower; good motions when they are once reduced into act, are thereby as it were knit, and brought to more consistency. They are then well past one of their critical periods, where most miscary, and so are more like to live, and continue with you. Besides the act strengthens that good motion and disposition which leads to it, and so makes you more ready for another act and that disposeth to more acts, and those to better, and repeated acts beget a habit, and this (as the Philosopher

tells us) is *uninterrupted* in, something that will stay by you. The hearts of the people being raised by *Hezekiah's* zealous speech; 2 Chron. 29. they were kept up in that posture, till the work designed by him was finished (till Religion was restored and reformed) and how came this to pass? Why, *the thing was done suddenly*, vers. 36. he pursued the peoples good inclinations, and brought them into act suddenly; he struck while the iron was hot. When your hearts are heated by the Ordinances, set immediately upon your work; the *primus impetus* affords a great advantage if it be improved, possibly in the vigour of it, you may overcome those great difficulties and oppositions, which have been too hard for you formerly, and may otherwise give you impediment hereafter, and this being mastered, your progress will be easier, you may go on towards heaven under the power of the Ordinances, with less interruption and fewer intermissions of these divine influences, 1 Jam. 1. 22, 23. *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves, for if any be a bearer of the word and not a doer, i. e. if he do it not presently (as appears by what follows) he is like to a man beholding his naturall face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.* The glass discovers what spots and sullages are in his face, that he may wash them off; or what is disordered about him, that he may correct and compose it; but if he do not this presently, if he put it off till some occurrence, divert him from the thoughts and remembrance of it, his looking in the mirror, will prove but a loss of time, a vain curiosity. Your use of the Ordinances is like to prove no better, if you practise not what they lead you to without delay, its like to be no other, than such a viewing of your selves in a glass, a meer fruitless speculation.

5. You must take much pains with your hearts, if you would have them retain the vertue and efficacy of the Ordinances. The effect of them should be as a nail fastned in a sure place, but the heart is so hard and knotty a piece that you cannot drive it in without many blows; it will require all your strength to force it in far enough, and all your care and watchfulness to keep it in when it is there. They grossly mistake Christianity, who take it to be consistent with our carnall ease and sloathfulness, who place it in notions or opinions, in fair shews, and a specious profession, in forms, gestures, or external observances, in conforming to this or that mode
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of Worship or Discipline. It were well for the World if one could be a Christian at such an easie rate: but they that please themselves with such conceits, they erre not knowing the Scriptures. The action of a Christian is all along in the New Testament, expressed by striving, wrestling, running and combating, exercises, wherein he that will not be worsted, most intend all his spirits, stretch all his sinews, put forth all his strength; he that is a Christian indeed, he must *μαλαίειν*, Eph. 6. 12. *δοῦναι*, Phil. 3. 12, 13, 14. Heb. 12. 14. *ἀγωνίζεσθαι*, Luke 13-24. his daily course must be a combating as for victory, a running as for a Crown, a striving as for life. The power and life of holiness can neither be attained, nor upheld, without an effectuall use of the Ordinances; the Ordinances will never be effectuall to purpose, unless the vertue of them abide upon the heart; now it meets with such reluctancy and opposition from the heart (so far as it is unrenewed) that it can never be fastned there, without striving and struggling and earnest contending, it must be done in despite of our own ease, and carnall humors and naturall inclination, and all the resistance of the body of death. If you think this too much, you think much to be Christians indeed, however you pretend to the name. Those that are acquainted with their own hearts, find it very hard to get them raised to a spirituall and heavenly temper, very difficult to get them pulled up (though they have the advantage of the most powerfull Ordinances) to any good posture; and when with much ado they are got up, exceeding difficult to keep them there. Alas we seem to be forcing a weighty stone up a steep hill, when with much toyl we have got it near the top, take but our hands off a little, leave it but to it self, and down it runs further in a moment, that we can get it up again in some hours. Our way to heaven lyes up the hill, that which is spiritual and heavenly is above us, the natural bent and tendency of our hearts is downwards; as there is no getting them up without toyl and pains, so when we have raised them a little, leave them but to themselves, grow but a little remiss and negligent, and down they run on a sudden, we shall quickly find them at the bottom of the hill, in a carnall, lukewarm earthly temper. When our hearts are effectually touched and raised, and moved in the use of Ordinances, there's no keeping them in a quick and lively motion, without striving and struggling, and as it were forcing them on with might and main. The influence of the Ordinances falling upon a sloath-

slothfull soul is quite lost; and meerly thrown away upon it, *Prov. 12. 27. The slothfull man roaſteth not that which he took in hunting.* So he loseth all his former labour because he will not take a little more pains, a slothfull soul loseth all the advantages he gets by following the Ordinances, for want of care and industry to retain and improve what he hath gotten.

6. Comply with the Spirit of God. These influences both as to the rise and continuance of them are from him. When you comply not with him, you grieve the Spirit, and provoke him to withdraw; and when he withdraws, these influences will be discontinued. If you detain the truth in unrighteousness, if you confine it to your mindes, so as the power thereof descends not upon your hearts and affections, comes not forth in your lives and actions, you do *ελεγχω* imprison the truth, and that is a great affront to the Spirit of Truth. If when the Spirit of God calls you to take up the Cross, to leave all to follow Christ contentedly and cheerfully in a low reproached afflicted condition; or if when he calls you up to a higher degree of self-deniall, mortification and holiness; you hang back, or turn aside, and refuse to follow his conduct; this grieves the Spirit of holiness. If you decline his institution for other devices, shrink back from the work you are engaged to, when it grows hazardous; strain your consciences to secure your outward enjoyments, will not be influenced by him, further than is consistent with your ease, credit, safety and worldly interest, you dishonour the Spirit of wisdom. This provokes the blessed Spirit to withdraw, and when the fire is gone, the heat will not long continue. If you refuse to continue under the influences of the Spirit in some things, its righteous with him not to continue them upon you in others. If you fear the displeasure of man more than the grieving of him, if you lean more to the hopes of this life, than his supports, and consult with flesh and blood instead of being directed by the wisdom which is from above; it will be no wonder if he give you over to your own conduct, and intermitting his own, leave you under the influences of your carnall fears, and worldly hopes.

7. Be frequent in the use of Ordinances, good impressions do most usually wear off in the intervals of holy duties, and the longer these are, the more danger there is, therefore make these interims as short as may be by quick returns to the Ordinances. It

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is observed that places under the line are not so hot, as some climates at a further distance from it, and this reason is given for it, those under the equinoctial, though they have the Sun more vertical, and the beams falling perpendicularly, cause a more intense heat; yet the nights being of equal length with the dayes, the coolness of those long nights doth more allay the heat than where the nights are shorter. Long intermissions of holy duties are like long nights, you may finde them by experience to be great coolers; if you live under more powerfull Ordinances, than some others, yet if they be more frequent and diligent in the use of what they have, they are like to have more spiritual warmth than you, and that with less allay and intermission. Besides when the advantage you have got by one Ordinance is declining and wearing off; the use of the same, or of some other, may revive and recover it, if you take it speedily before it be too far gone. Further, a slight impression, such as is not like to last long, may be re-inforced for a longer continuance, if you lay your selves quickly under the instrument that first made it. When *Elijah* had once tasted of the provision the Lord made for him in the Wilderness, he laid him down faith the Text, as having enough; but the Angel calls him to it again, for faith he, *The journey is too great for thee*, 1 King. 19. 6, 7. Hereupon he arose once more, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty dayes and forty nights, vers. 8. Once tasting will not serve your turn, a little will not be enough, so long a journey as yours is will spend much; nothing but a frequent, and often repeated use of the Ordinances will furnish you with such strength as will last you many dayes.

8. Finally, Look up to God for the continuance of this influence, pray, and pray in faith. Seek him and depend on him for it, *He will be found of those that seek him*, Matth. 7. 7. You have his promise for it and dependance on him, oblieth him too, *the expectation of the poor shall not perish*, Psal. 10. 18. it is not for his honour to fail those, whom he hath encouraged to rely on him; an ingenuous man will not do it, much less the faithfull God. This course *David* takes in the Text, he prayes and encourageth his faith while he is praying by that interest, which the faithfull have in the Lord by virtue of the Covenant, *O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel our Fathers keep this for ever*, yea the Lord himself leads us to this *Deut* 5. 24, 27, 29. the people were much affected; in that they had heard.

heard the Lords voice, *vers. 24.* this brought them up to a noble resolution, *vers. 27.* *Speak thou unto us, All that the Lord our God shall speak unto them, and we will hear it and do it.* Here-upon the Lord thus expresseth himself, *vers. 29.* *O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me and keep my Commandements alwayes, &c.* What greater encouragement can we have to desire this of God, than that he expresseth himself desirous we should have it? Faith is the main strength of prayer, and the great supports of faith are these two, that *he is able*, and that *he is willing*. These are to faith like the two pillars of the Temple, *1 Kings 7. 21.* and the names of them (there expressed) are very apposite. He set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof *Jachin*, i.e. he will establish, he is willing; and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof *Boaz*, i.e. in him is strength, he is able. Now faith hath both these pillars to support it in this business that the Lord is able to continue his influences, you will not question I hope, *He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think, according to the power which worketh in us*, *Ephes. 3. 20* and that *he is willing*, he puts it out of question, when he useth such an expression, as amongst men, signifies, a passionate desire, *O that there were such a heart in them &c* now (saith the Philosopher) *is ut non est dubium*, &c. that which one is both able and willing to do, shall be done. Both reason and faith see ground enough to conclude this Pray then, and pray believing, for as the Lord is able to do it, so it is according to his will, and whatsoever you ask according to his will, believing, it shall be done, *Matth. 21. 22.*

Thus much for what you are to practice; there are some things to be avoided, if you would have the influence of the Ordinances to be lasting, these we shall comprize in four particulars.

First, Take heed you perform not holy duties negligently, a heartless, formal, negligent attendance on the Ordinances, will be so farre from procuring a durable blessing, that it will fix a curse upon you, *Jer. 48. 10.* *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently*, see *Mal. 1. 8, 14.* If you invert the Apostles advice, *1 Cor. 7.* and deal with the things of God, as you should do, with those of the world. If you pray as though you prayed not, and hear as though you heard not, and use the Ordinances as though you did not use them: they will be no otherwise effectual, than if there were no efficacy in them, it will continue on you as though it continued not;

not; like that of the Sun in a Winter day, which thaws the earth a little at noon, but so as it is harder frozen up the next night. Therefore let your hearts be engaged in every holy duty, *Jer. 30. 21. Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me.* You must hear as for life, *Dent. 32. 46, 47. Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, &c. For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life, &c.* you must wrestle in prayer, your hearts in this duty should be as it were in a conflict, in an agony, *ouranarionda* is the Apostles word, *Rom. 15. 13. Now I beseech you brethren for the Lord Jesus Christs sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.* Your prayers should be such as the other Apostle describes, *James 5. 16. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,* the word rendred effectual fervent, is *inepyuion*. Now *inepyuion* is one possessed with a spirit, and acted by it. If the word here used look that way, then suitable to the matter to which it is applied, it imports a possession in a good sense. And *sinous inepyuion*, will be a prayer full of the holy Ghost, wherein that blessed Spirit is operative, exerting its force and energy. Such a prayer as shews the soul to be possessed of the holy Spirit and acted by it, so as all the powers of that soul are set a work and put upon motion towards God effectually. Such a prayer *availes much*, procures great advantages, and of long continuance.

Generally in all holy Ordinances your souls should stretch out themselves to reach the Lord, they should spring up to him in acts of love and desire, and claspe about him with delight and complacency, and lay hold on him with a humble and filial confidence, and stir up themselves to lay hold on him. We do all fade as a lease faith the Church, *Isa. 64. 6.* (both their persons and their righteousness did so) and the reason thereof follows ver. 7. *There is none that stireth up himself to take hold on thee.*

Secondly Beware of the world, meddle not with it more than needs must; and when it is needfull ingage not therein, but with fear, caution and vigilance. Carry your selves amongst worldly objects and employments, as though you were amongst cheats and thieves: they have the art to pick your heart sily, and to rob them of that which is more precious than Gold, when you little think of it.

Let not your minds and hearts plunge themselvss in the world: nothing sooner nothing oftner extinguisheth divine influences

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than this puddle. The cares, and delights, and employments of the world when they are immoderate or unseasonable, *they choke the Word*, *Math. 13. 22.* they stifle the issue of holy Ordinances, so as it becomes like the untimely birth of a woman.

When your hearts are warmed in holy duties, you should be as cautious and wary how you venture into the world; as you are of going into the frosty air, when you are all in a sweat. What is kindled by the Word or Prayer, &c. how quickly is it puffed out by the world, when you rush into it unwarily? it requires as much care to keep it in; as to keep a Candle in, when you would carry it through the open air in a rainy blustering night. The further you are above the world, the longer may you retain any spirituall impressions. Geographers write of some Mountains whose tops are above the middle Region of the Air; and there lines and figures being drawn in the dust, have been found (say they) in the same form and order, untouched, undefaced a long time after: and the reason is, because they are above those winds, and showres, and storms, which soon wear out, and efface any such draughts in this lower Region: The lower your minds and hearts and conversations are, the more in the hurry of this boisterous world, the less will any thing that is heavenly and spiritual abide upon them. Let the soul be brought into never so good order, by the help of holy duties: yet a little unwary ingaging in earthly business will ruffle, disturb and quite discompose it.

When your souls are by power of the Ordinance set on motion towards Christ and Heaven; if you would hold on in a continued course, you must beware of worldliness, and keep free as much as may be from earthly incumbrances and intanglement, *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sinne which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us*, *Heb. 12. 1.* Let us persevere and hold out in that gracious and heavenly course, which the Gospel hath put us on: but that this may be done, one great impediment must be removed, *The sin that doth so easily beset us must be shaken off.* Now that sin as some Expositors conceive, is worldliness, and it is probable for *μεταλλειν*, being a circumstance *αἰματιν*, *εἰς μεσαια*, if we render it literally, is the sin that hath goodly circumstances. And no sin sets off it self with more goodly circumstances than worldliness, no sin hath more specious pleas and pretences to excuse, vindicate and justify it self. No sin hath more fig leaves to cover

ver its nakedness, and to shrowd it from discovery and conviction than worldliness. This must be shaken off, it is the great defacer of heavenly impressions, the cheif interrupter of holy motions: if you would hold on when the *impetus* which is impress on you by any Ordinance, hath set you a going; beware of the world, beware of worldliness.

Thirdly, Take heed of any inordinacy in affection, inclination or design. Such inordinancies give the heart a strong bias, holy duties check it but a little, give it but as it were a small rub: when this is once past over: it will hold on, in that course to which it is most swayed. The Ministry of *John Baptist* had some influence upon *Herod*, *He heard John gladly, and did many things*, Mark 6. 20. but sensuality being predominant, those better inclinations were quite overpowred. The word had some effect upon *Simon Magus*, *He believed*, Act. 8. 13. and being taken for a believer *was baptized*, and afterwards *continued with Phillip*, &c. but a strong affectation of vain-glory suppressed those better motions, and the worst got up-moſt. Take heed of any inordinacy as to lawfull things, your relations, studies, ordinary callings, &c. this will not suffer you to come so often to holy duties, to stay so long in them, or to be so intent upon them, as is requisite for the deep impressing of their efficacy: and after they are done, this will hurry your souls from under those thoughts and exercises, which should fix and settle their virtue and influence upon your minds and hearts. Natural bodies follow the tendency of that element which is predominant in them, a stone moves downwards, it would beat the centre; that which stops it, offers it violence, and when the force is removed, down it falls freely: Just thus doth the heart follow the tendency of these inordinancies, if it meet with a stop in an Ordinance, that's but an ungratefull violence to it, it will struggle to break through it, will be restless till the force be removed, till the power of the Ordinance be shaken off, which checks an inclination natural and acceptable to it, and what hopes in this ease, that the efficacy of any holy duty will long continue?

Fourthly, Rest not in the best performance of any duty, nor in any assistances you find therein, though they be special and more than ordinary. If this satisfy and exalt you, you will be apt to grow secure and careless, not looking to the improvement of Ordinances when once they are over, and that's the way to lose all. We

are apt to take most dangerous colds, when we are in the greatest heats. And its observed that some professors have had the fowlest falls, after they have been most elevated in holy imployments. The resting upon the *opus operatum* the meer outward performance of a duty, when the heart is not engaged therein, is an open pit; which none fall into, save those that are blind: but the resting upon the *opus operantis* a duty affectionately performed, is a more secret, and so a more dangerous snare. He that makes account he hath done enough, because he hath done well; may be apt to think he is not obliged to look further after it: and so the continued influence of the duty upon his heart and life, which is indeed the principal advantage of it, may be neglected and consequently lost for want of looking to.

To conclude, Make not the Ordinances your end, but use them as the means to attain it. They are not enjoined us for themselves, but in order to something more desirable, their end is something further than their use. Take heed you place not all your Religion, in hearing, praying, communicating, &c. neither count your selves religious enough; because you are much and often in these duties. This is to make them your end, and then you will rest therein, without proceeding further (for the motion of the Agent is terminated in his end): and so you will stay short of that, for which they were principally intended, *viz.* the keeping of your hearts and minds in a settled posture of holiness and righteousness: and neglect that, by which this main end of the Ordinances is onely to be attained, *viz.* the continuing of their influence upon you.

So much for the case propounded; which I have indeavoured to resolve (as the nature of it requires) practically: and therefore as there is no time for, so there will be less need of Application. But that I may not dismiss you without something of this nature, having laid your duty before you in the Observation, and shewed you how it may be performed in satisfying the case: Let me now press you to the performance of it by one Consideration, which will have the force of a Motive, where there is any sense of soul-concernments.

If the efficacy of the Ordinances abide not on you, you cannot be fruitfull under them, at least you cannot *bring forth fruit unto perfection*, (as the expression is *Luke 8. 14.*) you may bring forth buds, or leaves, or blossomes, &c. but if their influence continue not, that which you bring forth will never come to ripeness and perfection;
it

it will be crude and sowre at best, and sowre Grapes are as bad as no fruit in the Lords account: and unfruitfullnes will provoke the Lord to deprive you of the Gospel and Ordinances, *Isaiah 5, 2, 3.* *Ye looked that it should bring forth Grapes; and it brought forth wild Grapes.*—And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof.—I will lay it waste that it shall not be pruned nor digged.—I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. The meaning of this parable (so far as concerns our purpose) is expressed by another threatening, denounced for the same sin, *Matth. 21. 43.* *The Kingdom of God (i.e. the Gospel of the Kingdom) shall be taken from you, and given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof.* And Christs threatening of *Ephesus* amounts to as much, *Rev. 2. 4, 5.* *Nevertheless I have something against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.* The first impressions of the Gospel were worn off and vanished.—And what follows, *I will come against thee quickly, and remove thy Candlestick out of its place, unless thou repent.* So that this sin will pull up your hedge, and break down your wall, level all your securities; and so lay you open to the boar of the wood, and the wild beasts of the field: such as instead of digging and pruning you, will devour and lay you waste, and *Sharon* will become a desert. This sin will provoke Christ to let the Stars fall out of his right hand: so as you will be left to perish for want of vision. This sin will provoke the Lord to take the Gospel of the Kingdom from you: and leave you under the hellish influences of the Prince of darkness. This sin will overturn your Candlesticks, and extinguish your lights, and leave you nothing but the snuffs. This sin will deliver your strength into captivity, and your glory into the enemies hand. This sin will smite the shepherds and scatter the flock, and lay the heritage of God desolate. This sin will cause your Sun to set at noon, and turn the day of your gracious visitation, into a sad and dismal night. This sin will turn the place which hath been a valley of vision, into a seat of darkness, and a valley of the shadow of death.

If then you would avoid a judgement, which strikes not only at your estates and lives, but at your souls: if you would prevent that dreadfull stroke, which may not onely reach your selves, but your posterity, your children and childrens children; if you would not have them and your selves, and thousand and millions with you, bereaved of the Gospel, and the means of grace and life, take all care.

care and pains that the influences of the Ordinances do not slide from you, that they be not as water spilt upon the ground. Be faithful and diligent in the use of the forementioned directions, and all other means which may be effectual to fix them. And if hereby your hearts are wrought up to such a resolution, *The Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of your hearts.*

FINIS.

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